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THE WOOD WITCH:

—OR,—

THE DOUBLE PLOT.

A Story of the Bay Province.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

[CONTINUED.]

CHAPTER X.

A NEW VICTIM.

MR. LYON had been slightly stunned by the blow he had received, but he soon arose to his feet, though it was some moments after this that he fully regained his scattered senses. He gazed around for a moment, but he found only his daughter present with him. She had just moved to his side to assist him, when he started up.

"Where is Lucian Willis?" he asked, in a hushed tone. He spoke with difficulty, for his passions nearly overpowered him.

"He has gone," answered Agnes, trembling with fear; for she had never seen her father so before.

"Gone, has he? O, the villain! He shall suffer for this! By the powers that made me, [illegible] not here again. Agnes—you will never speak with him more. Do you understand? Never!"

The maiden gazed fearfully into her father's face, but she made no reply.

"Promise me, Agnes, that you will do as I have said. Promise that you will never speak with him more—that you will spurn him from you if he dares to approach you. Promise."

The fair girl gazed up into her father's face, and after a moment's thought, she replied:

"I cannot make the promise."

"How? Dare you disobey me?"

"No, no, father—I would not disobey you in anything just and proper; but in this thing which you ask I cannot promise."

"But by the powers of darkness, you shall promise! Mark me—*you shall!*"

"Remember, my father, that in affairs of this kind one may not quickly make a promise. You have no right to require such a promise from me."

"I haven't, eh? We shall see! You say you do not know where Laura Burke is. In this I am forced to believe you; but you shall not ride over my authority at will. Once more I ask you—will you promise never to speak with Lucian Willis more?"

"I cannot, my father."

"You mean you *will* not!" cried the parent, seizing his child by the arm and shaking her furiously. "You mean to be ugly, do you? You think to make a puppet of your father, eh?" And as he thus continued speaking, he shook his daughter violently, and the grip upon her arm was painful. The hair fell in confused masses about her face, and she looked pale and agitated.

"There, Miss Obstinacy! Now will you promise?" hissed the parent, trembling with rage.

Agnes stepped back and swept the dishevelled hair from her face, and then, in a low, tremulous tone, she said:

"My father, when you descend to such means you sever the only tie that binds me to you. Never will I give a promise which, in its fulfilment, can only result in a life-long misery to myself. I wish not to disobey my parent, but never will I disobey the dictates of my own knowledge of right."

Mr. Lyon moved back a pace and gazed into his daughter's face. He saw that it was deadly pale, and that the lips were firmly set together. He saw, too, that the small, white hands were clasped, and that the swelling bosom heaved with powerful emotion. Whether he feared that his anger might lead him to some new outburst, or whether he feared further to test his daughter's firmness, is not certain, but in a low whisper he bade her go to her room; and probably by way of signifying that he was not conquered, he added:

"And, mark me, if you disobey me in what I have this night laid upon you, you will do it at your peril!"

Agnes waited to hear no more, but with quick steps she sought her chamber, and when she had reached it she threw herself first upon her bed, where she remained some moments. Her next movement was to sink down upon her knees; and then, in low, fervent tones, she implored God to forgive her for the wrong she might have done, and to guide and protect her for the future. She was more calm after this, and ere long she sought her pillow, where she at length lost herself in the maze of strange and varying dreams.

But the father thought not of prayer—he knew nothing of it. He had never felt the Divine influence of fervent supplication to Deity. He had done much lip-service, and he had made long prayers at the street corners, that he might be heard of men; but never yet since he learned the language he spoke, had he once raised his soul in devout appeal to his Maker. As soon as he was left alone he commenced to pace the floor. His fists were clutched, and his teeth were set.

"By the power that made me," he hissed to himself, "I'll now walk straight in to this work. Laura Burke shall be mine if she is on the earth, and her champion shall bite the dust with her! And she has told the thing she heard, too! Ah,

The furious man paced up and down the room awhile longer, and then he took his lamp and went into the sitting-room, where his wife was waiting for him. She looked up into his face, and from the very expression which rested there she knew that he had not succeeded in the work he had undertaken, and it was not until some moments after he had taken his seat that she ventured to interrogate him.

"How did the young rascal behave?" she asked.

"He refused—utterly refused to tell me one word," replied the husband, trembling.

"Did he dare?"

"Yes—but he shall suffer for it. He is not clear yet."

"I wish—I—I— But you can punish him, Roger. Of course he will have no more to say to our Agnes."

The merchant started, and for some moments he gazed thoughtfully into his wife's face without speaking. But finally he told her all that had occurred in the parlor, simply omitting the fact of Lucian's having knocked him down. He related the conversation as near as he could remember it, and also told of Agnes's course.

"And now," he said, "I simply mean what I have said. Let me catch them together again, and—and—they'll rue it."

Mrs. Lyon was too indignant to speak; but the nervous clutching of her hands very plainly indicated that she would have done wonders had any one dared to treat her so. However, she smothered her indignation sufficiently to admit of her speaking, and then she said:

"Let *me* catch 'em together, that's all. But I guess you needn't fear. Agnes may have been a little stubborn to you, but she wont dare to show any of it to me. And now don't you think you can find the runaway?"

"I am going to try. I know the direction they took, and I have no doubt I may find her. This afternoon I learned about it as I told you, and you may be assured that I shall spare no pains in following up the information I have thus accidentally gained."

The worthy couple conversed awhile upon the subject, and then they retired.

On the following morning Mr. Lyon was stirring betimes, and by seven o'clock he was ready to set out with three men who had been engaged by order of the court to help arrest the witch. Mr. Lyon believed he could lead them to the very spot where their victim was to be found, for he had learned that there was only one house in the direction the youth had been seen to take with the two females, and that was the cot occupied by old Walter Arthurson and his grandson. With this information, then, the merchant set out. One of his companions knew the way, and when the wood was reached he went ahead as guide. As soon as the first sight of the humble cot was gained through the trees, Mr. Lyon bade his men halt, and he then placed himself where he could see any one who should enter or leave the place. He had remained there nearly half an hour, and was upon the point of moving on, when the door of the cot was opened, and a young man stepped out. In a few moments more a female form appeared at the door. Mr. Lyon could not distinguish features at that distance, but he was sure from the dress, and general appearance, that it was the Widow Burke. At this he would have moved on, had he not, a moment afterwards, seen a second female form appear; and this he knew was no less a personage than Laura herself.

He waited until both the women had re-entered the cot, and then he called on his men to follow him. He had gained about half the distance when he saw the youth returning; and the youth saw him and his party, too, for he hurried into the cot as quickly as possible, and closed the door after him.

"Never mind," cried Lyon. "We have them safely enough now. Hurry on, my men. If they refuse us admittance, we can easily enough smash their door in."

But they had no occasion to do this, for when they reached the cot the door was opened very easily, and they entered. But——Where were those who had been seen to enter the cot? Not one of them were now to be seen. Old Walter Arthurson sat there, in his great chair, but he alone occupied the place. Mr. Lyon rushed to the suspended quilt which screened the bed where the widow and her child slept, but there were no females there. He looked upward, but only the bare rafters met his gaze. He looked about him, but not a corner could he detect where any one could hide.

"Ho, old man," he cried, turning to the aged cripple, "where are the two women, and the young man, who entered this place a few moments since?"

"You'll have to search for them, sir, if you wish to find them, for I know not where they are," Walter returned, in a tremulous tones.

"What, old fool, you don't know where they [illegible] me?"

"I do not, my son."

"Don't *son* me, but tell me where these people are. Tell me, or I'll—I'll—make you suffer!"

"But surely, sir, I cannot tell you of that which I know not."

"Did not a young man and two women enter this place not five minutes since?"

"I think they did."

"Then where are they now?"

"I cannot surely tell you."

"Now by the powers above me, old dotard, if you do not instantly tell me where they are, I'll make you suffer such torments as—"

"Not such as you now suffer in your ungodly rage," calmly interrupted the old man, bending upon his interlocutor a look which might have shamed a more decent man.

"Let us make a search, sir," at this juncture, suggested one of the men.

Lyon caught at the idea, and he gave orders accordingly.

"Mayn't they have gone out by that window?" asked another of the men, pointing to the only window in the house.

"Ah, yes," uttered Lyon. "One of you stay here, and the rest of us will run out and make a search."

Now had they thought to examine that window carefully they would have seen that three full grown persons could not have got out there in the short time which had elapsed from the entering of the missing parties to the coming of the searching crew. This window was only some six feet from the floor, but it was not over eighteen inches square. And then, again, they might have found, by inspection, that the sash could not be opened over half-way, nor quite that; this precaution having been taken to prevent the ingress of wild cats on warm nights when it was necessary for comfort to leave the window partly open. However, they stopped not to take any such notes, but Mr. Lyon and two of his men immediately darted out at the door and ran around at the back side of the cot. There was a small garden patch here, and at the distance of a few rods the wood was stout and thick, most of the clearing having been done in front. The soil was soft beneath the window, and one of the men had the wit to think of looking there for footprints, but he found none.

"I don't care," cried Lyon; "they must have come out this way somewhere, so we'll hunt for them."

So for nearly half an hour the trio searched about through the woods, but no traces of the missing ones could be found.

"Mayn't they all be witches, and gone off on a broomstick, or an iron shovel?" suggested one of the men.

"Ay—that's it," cried the second man. "They are all witches, sir, and have gone right off through the air. Depend upon it, sir."

Now Mr. Roger Lyon simply knew that this idea was ridiculous, but he chose not to say so, for thereby he would have weakened his own hold upon the confidence of his followers.

"It must be so," he said; "and that old man may be the worst witch of the lot."

Thus speaking, he turned towards the cot once more, and when he entered it, he made one more search over the place. With the exception of the door and the little window aforesaid, there were no visible means of egress from the place. The walls were of solid logs, pointed up with a mixture of clay and straw, and the floor was of hewn plank, without any break or seam, save those between the planks.

"Now, old man," uttered Mr. Lyon, "you can have your choice; you can tell me where those people are of whom I have asked, or you can go with me. The girl whom you have concealed is a witch, and you should know the fearful responsibility you run in thus aiding her."

"Roger Lyon," spoke the old man, gazing fixedly into the merchant's face, "you can do with me as you please. I have told you all I shall tell."

"Then, by heavens, you, too, are a servant of the devil! I know it well. You have whiffled these people off through the air. Didn't you see him do it, Bixby?"

"Certain, I did," quickly replied the man thus addressed.

"Roger Lyon," again spoke the old man—and this time he had a strange look, "have you not yet blackened your soul to a hue deep enough with sin, that you must add this fearful perjury? Do you not know that before God and man you utter a most deadly falsehood when you thus uphold the infamous delusion which at present curses our land? I know how a mind already warped by religious enthusiasm may lay hold upon this thing; but a soul like yours never yet held such a thought."

"Old fool, do you know to whom you speak?"

"Ay, Roger Lyon—too well!"

[illegible] started with a strange shudder at the [illegible] gazing with more than ordinary interest into the old man's face, and now he seemed to have been startled by something that he found there. It was some moments ere he could find words for a reply. He still gazed into those age-marked features, and the tremor now extended over his whole frame.

"Who are you?" he finally asked.

"My name is Walter Arthurson. Do you think you ever saw me before?"

"I—I— No, I never did."

"Perhaps not, Roger Lyon, but I have seen you before, and I could to your blackened soul add an emotion which should make your very bones quake."

"Out, lying warlock!" gasped the merchant. "This is but one of your witching spells, but you have not the power over me you seek. Bixby, do you not note the strange effects of this man's eye upon me? By the powers that hold me, I can feel his dark power of evil reaching to my very bones; but the power of God holds me up. Do you not notice?"

"Yes, sir," returned Bixby, who was an honest believer in the power of witches, and who trembled with apprehension while he spoke; "I do notice it."

"Then away with him at once! By heavens, we'll not leave him to destroy more souls!"

"O, Roger Lyon, cannot the torture of years soften thy heart?"

"Silence, old prater! Thy scheming of evil witchery can harm me not, for my trust is in the Lord."

But even as the bad man spoke his face was pale as ashes, and his whole frame trembled. Yet his companions thought 'twas only the power of the witch that moved him so, and they were consequently very ready to assist in carrying him off. The old man was too lame to walk any distance, and it was quickly arranged that a litter should be formed upon which he could be carried to the high road, and there a horse could be procured.

"Once more, old man, tell me where—"

"Hold, Roger Lyon," interrupted Arthurson; "you have had my answer, and from that I cannot waver. Now do your worst."

Mr. Lyon started up with an oath, and ordered his companions to form a litter at once. For this purpose they got some stout poles from the yard, which had probably been cut for roofing poles to the shed, and across two of these they laid several shorter sticks, and then upon these a coverlid from one of the beds. The old man made no resistance, but suffered himself to be laid upon the simple litter and carried out of doors. Then the four men took the litter upon their shoulders and started off. Walter Arthurson uttered not a word, not did he exhibit any signs of fear. Only his face wore that same look of strange meaning, and his eye was fixed upon Roger Lyon with an expression that made the latter start whenever he met it.

But the merchant hesitated not. He reached the town with his burden, and when he had told to the officers his story, they admitted the old man to confinement without further questioning. Roger Lyon felt a peculiar transient triumph, but he dared not dive deeper down into his soul.

CHAPTER XI.

A NEW LOVELIGHT.

ROGER LYON and his companions had been gone nearly half an hour when the broad stone which formed the hearth of the fire-place was swung upon a pivot in the centre, one end rising while the other sank, and the head of Thomas Arthurson emerged from the opening thus made. He gazed carefully around, and then came up into the cot. He looked all about the room, and then he went to the door. When he re-entered the dwelling, the widow was looking up from the curious orifice through which the youth had made his appearance.

"Have they gone?" she asked, anxiously.

"Yes—and they have carried my poor old grandfather with them," he returned.

"O, it cannot be," Mrs. Burke cried, coming up as she spoke. And as she came Laura followed.

"Of course they must have done it, for the old man could not have made his way even to the door unassisted. His rheumatism is upon him badly. Yes, they have surely taken him away."

"Not your grandfather?" uttered Laura, starting.

"Yes."

"Then I shall never forgive myself. O, I would rather a thousand times have suffered than to have had him taken away."

"Nay, Laura, not so. It is not your fault that men are wicked. Had I known, or even suspected, that they could have done this, I should have remained with him myself. But I must find him. Dare you remain here alone?"

"Certainly, sir."

I am gone," the youth resumed, "and if any one approaches whom you do not know to be friends you can easily make your escape as I have learned you."

"We shall do very well, sir," the mother said, "and we would have you by all means go."

Thomas took several turns up and down the room, and then he stopped by Laura's side.

"Laura," he said, at the same time taking her hand. "If I thought evil could come to you, I would not leave you."

A quick, beaming light danced in the maiden's eyes as she heard these words, and her lids drooped for a moment.

"But you owe your grandfather all your efforts," she murmured, looking up into the youth's face. "We can take care of ourselves, especially since you have afforded us such generous opportunity of escape."

"I will go, then, and find out at least where the old man is; but you must promise me that you will not leave the house while I am gone. Promise me this, for I should be miserable indeed to find you gone when I got back."

Laura promised with a tremulous voice, and then Thomas turned away. He took down his rifle and examined the priming, and then having taken a small flask of powder and a few balls, he put on his hat and threw the rifle upon his shoulder. He had moved a step towards the door when he stopped and turned. He was close by Laura, and he took her hand once more.

"Do not expose yourself. If my grandfather is in prison, as I fear, and I cannot gain his release, I must not come back here and find you gone."

"But do you think he can be in prison?" the maiden asked, eagerly.

"Yes, and I'll tell you why; I am sure now that I heard them tell him that he was a witch. It was when I came once to hear what they were doing. I could not then tell exactly what they were saying, though I thought they were speaking of you. But I remember one word which I did not understand then that comes back plainly to me now. It was 'warlock,' and of course that could only have been applied to him."

"Then—then," uttered Laura, throwing her heart into her look and tone, "do not venture into that bad man's power. O, he will surely take you, too. I know he is angry with you now because you have aided me, and he can easily bring evidence of witchcraft against you. You will not let him capture you."

"What evidence can he find of that sort against me?" the youth asked, gazing now affectionately into the maiden's face.

"Why, you saw he saw you when you entered the house, and what must have been his surprise to find you invisible the moment he entered? Ah, you know what a wicked, designing man can do."

"I see—I see," said Thomas, in a thoughtful mood. "But I will not venture near him, if I think he has no power to hold me. I will only go to town and find out where the old man is; and that I can do easily, for many people must have seen him taken in. So fear not. Be of good courage, for I will surely come back, and until then God bless and keep you."

As he spoke he gently bent his hd forward, and his lips touched the maiden's air brow. She did not shrink from the touch, n did she tremble when she felt the gentle kiss aced forever in her keeping. She did how her hd when the hand that had held her's was withdrn, and she heard Thomas tell her mother so very careful. She looked up—and she and henother were alone. One moment she follow the retreating form with her eye, and then she owed her head upon her hands and burst to tears.

"What is it, Laura?" her mother asked, meing quickly to her side.

"Nothing," was the reply.

"But it is something, Laura."

"No, no, mother. O, I cannot help this. It will pass away in a moment."

"But what is it? Are you frightened?"

"No, mother."

"Ah—you're not crying because Thomas kissed you?"

The maiden gazed quickly up into her mother's face, and the expression of her countenance was very plain to the honest widow.

"For shame, Laura. What would the noble, kind, good young man think of you, if he knew of this? Crying for so simple a thing? Why, I should think you would feel proud to know that he thought so much of you."

Poor Laura—she looked up in surprise. How blind her mother was. She could not see that the sudden flood of blissful hope had made the joy-cup overflow. The good woman would expect her child to smile very sweetly under such circumstances.

"Now really, Laura, I do hope you wont let him see you do so foolish a thing, for I know he is a good and virtuous young man. Only think how nobly he has treated us, and how he has put himself out for us."

"O, mother, mother, don't say any more. It was not that."

"Then what was it, Laura?"

"I cannot tell you. It was only a sudden emotion I felt. I could not help it."

"Well—I never. I declare, Laura, I do believe it was all just because he kissed you."

The poor girl contrived to distract her mother's mind from the subject by asking her to close the door, while she went to close the hearth stone which had been left up until now.

The man who built the hut was an old hunter, as has been before stated. At first he erected a temporary camp close by the spot, and one day he discovered, by pure accident, a small hole right by the side of an old tree. Upon examination he found that the spur of an adjacent ledge came out here, and that beneath it was quite a cavern. He cut down the tree, and upon removing the trunk he found that an easy access was thus gained to the place. It proved to be a subterranean chamber, some fifty or sixty feet in length, and about twenty broad, and at the inner [illegible] the cave itself, but upon second thoughts he concluded to build a hut directly over it; and so he did. Next he procured two stout iron gudgeons, and having procured a rock of the proper dimensions he shaped it with his hammer, and then drilled a hole upon each side, a short distance from the centre, into which he fixed his gudgeons, or pivots, by means of molten lead. This done, he prepared two sills for the gudgeons to play upon, and having fixed them, and set his stone, he proceeded to lay his floor. The longest and heaviest end of his stone he caused to rest upon a projecting beam, so that its own weight would bring it to its place and keep it there so long as there was no material pressure upon the other end; but to keep the other end in place in case any one should tread upon it, he fixed a spring beneath it, made of stout white ash, which could be moved back by pulling upon the bottom of the wooden strip which graced the side of the fire-place, the bottom thereof reaching beneath the floor, and being connected with the stout ash spring by an iron pot hook. A simple ladder was then set up, and the hunter thus had a secure retreat from the power of his enemies. And he was not long in proving the worth of his new house and its appendage, for within a week after the work was done a party of Indians made a descent upon the hunter's cot, but they found nothing there, all his valuables being with him—below.

As the town of Salem grew in size, and people began to settle nearer to the wood—and as the fowling piece and rifle of the amateur sportsman began to crack about his ears, the old hunter made preparations to pull up stakes and move. He was acquainted with Walter Arthurson, and for a mere nominal sum he sold out his place, betaking himself to a new field of wood and game.

The sun had sunk behind the tall tree tops when Thomas Arthurson returned. Laura cast one searching glance into his face, and she knew that he was more hopeful than when he went away.

"Well," he said, after he had taken his seat, "things may not be so bad after all. I have seen my grandfather—"

"Then he is not in prison?" eagerly cried Laura.

"Yes, he has been placed in the jail, under charge of witchcraft. I went to the jailor, and he told me he could not let me see the prisoner without a permit from the chief justice. So I went to the chief justice, and who do you think he was?"

"Why—his name is Stoughton," returned the widow.

"Yes—William Stoughton, the old Lieutenant Governor. I lived with him in Boston nearly three years as a sort of page and usher. He was always very kind to me, and it was he that gave me money to buy this cot—and more, too—six times more than I needed to pay for the place. However, I found him, and what do you think he told me?"

Of course the women couldn't guess, so Thomas told them:

"He told me that Mr. Lyon had told him that the old man, Walter Arthurson, was the very king of evil spirits in this region—that he whisked all three of us off out of sight directly before his face and eyes, and that his influence was such upon him—upon Lyon—that he feared at one time he should not be able to take him. He said he was seized with a sudden weakness, a tremulousness, and a sort of dying sensation; and that it was only by the most devout and unremitting prayers to God that he escaped the baneful effects of the old wizard's evil eye. What do you think of that?"

"But is the good old man safe?" asked Laura. "Will the judge save him?"

"The judge told me that if proof, or a show of proof, were brought against my grandfather, he must be regularly tried; but he assured me he should have the benefit of all that could be said in his favor, or against his accusers. And then he let me go in to see the good old man. I expected to find him very sad and melancholy, but, a the contrary, he was as cheerful as I ever saw him in my life, so far as my fear was concerned. But there was a peculiar sadness in his mind which came from another cause; but he was unwilling to tell me what it was, and I did not urge it. But he bade me be assured that no harm could come to him through the charge that had been brought against him. He said Roger Lyon was the chief instrument of his imprisonment, and that over that man he held a power which would crush him in an instant. When I told him of the friend I had found in the judge, he was much pleased. He bade me return to you, and rest assured that he could not be more safe than he is now. And now, Laura—you'll pardon me for using your most familiar title, eh?"

The maiden bowed her head, but she could not hide the crimson hue that suffused her face. O, had she known the real state of the youth's feelings towards her she would have smiled her reply most frankly; but now she dared not betray a feeling which might not be reciprocated. But she contrived a very poor method to conceal it, for those trembling blushes spoke in spite of her.

"And now," the youth continued, "I wish to ask you a few plain questions. A simple statement of facts from me to Judge Stoughton may have much influence. Have you any objections to telling me why Mr. Lyon seeks to destroy you?"

"No, sir."

"Then why is it?"

Laura went on and told the whole story. She told all she had heard from behind the curtain of the great bay-window, and all she had subsequently heard from others respecting the murmurs of the merchants who had the falsely invoiced goods.

"O," Thomas uttered, as soon as she had concluded, "I am glad you have told me of this, for now the judge will know what manner of man he is who has made these complaints."

After this the widow proceeded to get supper, and when the meal was eaten Thomas asked Laura if she would not walk with [illegible] She cepted the invitation, and was soon ready.

Arm-in-arm the couple walked around the open space in front of the cot, and after various common-place matters had been talked of, and just as a prolonged silence was becoming embarrassing, Thomas said, in a very low tone to commence with, but which gained power as he went on:

"Laura, a feeling which has been gradually growing in my soul since you have been here was brought to a full, palpable development this morning. When the first note of alarm came, and with it the thought that you might be snatched from me, then I knew the full depth of my feelings towards you. I had known you before. I had seen you, and spoken with you. I knew you were beautiful, and I heard people say you were as good as you were lovely; but since I have known you so well, I have seen all for myself, and now I must ask you a plain question: Can you not learn to love me?"

"I fear not," whispered the maiden, trembling.

"How? Are you serious in this?"

The quick sadness and pain of the question startled Laura, and she saw she must speak plainly.

"You asked me if I could *learn*."

"Ha—I am not deceived. You do love me now. Is it so?"

"How can I help it?"

"How? Why you mustn't if you can. O, happy moment! Since this morning, Laura, I have wished a thousand times that I had not kissed you as I did. But I could no more have helped it than I could have helped breathing. You were not offended?"

"No, Thomas."

"And do you know I thought you were. I thought you looked kind of startled and hurt. But you didn't, after all. And now, if we all come safely out of this trouble that hangs about us at present, you will become my wife. You will, I know?"

"If you can take me for my love, and be content with my poor efforts to make you always happy, and keep your home always comfortable, then—then—"

"I know—I know. You will be mine?"

"Yes, Thomas."

And there, in the pale moonlight, with the stars of heaven looking down from their sparkling eyes of light upon them, they pledged their first vows of love. Surely that was a holy, joyous beam from out the cloud that enveloped them.

CHAPTER XII.

A SPIRIT OF EVIL, AND A SPIRIT OF GOOD.

Mr. Roger Lyon sat in his own small private room, where he kept his books and papers. It was on the very night following his visit to the cot in the wood, whither he went witch-hunting, and from whence he had brought a wizard. He had a large book open before him—a ledger of some sort—and around him lay numerous papers, most of which were folded in uniform shape, and bound up with tape. He had been overhauling his ledger, and it was now open to the page where were entered some very recent shipments. As his eye rested upon the column of figures which were there footed up in generous numbers, a momentary gleam of satisfaction lighted up his dark features. But the gleam did not long remain, and when it had passed away his face assumed a troubled expression; and there were some signs of mental disquietude, almost amounting to agony, perceptible upon the heavy face.

Thus he sat when some one knocked at his door. With a quick, nervous movement he closed the book before him, and then having gathered up a few of the papers which were open, and shoved them out of sight, he bade the applicant enter. It was Mr. Michael Malone.

"How now?" asked the merchant, testily.

"There's a man below, sur, as would like ter see ye's."

"Who is he?"

"Indade, I can't tell ye, yer honor. But he's a mitey fine-lookin' gintleman, barrin' a bit ov disqualification ov his face."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mane, yer worship, that he's as homely as Teddy's cow, and she was so homely that she gave clear buttermilk."

"Don't you know his name?"

"Indade he towlt it to me, but I've lost it jist now. Eh—there was a Bion wid it."

"Ah—Bion Lowton."

"Good for ye's, yer honor, for that's it."

"You may show him up."

As soon as Michael was gone, Roger Lyon examined the priming of his pistol, and then put it back in his breast pocket. This was not because he feared the man who was to visit him in particular, for he knew Bion Lowton only by name, having heard of him as a sort of gentleman in Boston, and as having lately visited Salem. But that man was jealous of his kind. He placed no confidence in any of them. Placed upon a bed of thorns, he could not rest, and he feared that every new man who called might come to claim some redress, or to seek some revenge.

Ere long the visitor was introduced, and Mr. Lyon arose to welcome him. The merchant gazed upon the tall, uncouth form, and upon the coarse, heavy features, and he remembered to have seen the gentleman in court the day before.

"Mr. Lyon, I believe?"

"At your service, sir."

"My name is Lowton. You may have heard of me?"

"Often, sir—often. Take a seat, sir."

So the visitor seated himself, and after a few moments of silence, he said:

"There appears to be quite an excitement hereabouts concerning witchcraft."

"Yes, sir," returned Lyon, guardedly, at the same time looking his visitor sharply in the face, as though he would search out some ulterior or hidden meaning in the question. But the speaker's features only ex[illegible]d the same hard indifference as before.

"Do you think the evil spirits are doing much mischief?"

"There appears to be some mischief abroad," remarked Lyon, rather coolly.

At this Mr. Lowton started, for he had a vulnerable point in his own memory. But he betrayed no fear.

"I think you have had some hand in bringing these evil possessed people to trial, sir?"

"I have, sir," said the merchant, speaking this time with a very slight show of distaste to such questioning.

"Ah—yes, so I had been informed; and it was under that impression that I called."

There was a short silence after this, and during its reign the two men eyed each other very inquisitively. Lowton resumed:

"I suppose we might just as well understand ourselves now as at any time, and also understand each other. I am of the opinion that we should neither of us gain anything by betraying the other's secrets. What think you of it, sir?"

"Well—really, sir—I hardly know what you are diving at," returned Lyon, a little nervous.

"Why, I simply mean—you will excuse me for speaking plainly—I simply mean that probably neither of us has any great faith in the existence of real witches."

"Sir?"

"O, don't be precipitate, Mr. Lyon. You know how we men of the world look upon these things. Now, probably Henry Tudor would never have devoutly defended the practice of chopping off women's heads, but he found it a very convenient method by which to rid himself of troublesome wives, nevertheless; so he gave it his sanction. Don't you understand?"

"I must say, I do not, sir."

"Then, sir, to speak more plainly," resumed Lowton, in a tone very slightly marked by impatience, "I do not think you care much about the removal of witches, save such as are directly troublesome to you."

"You are very free in your judgment, sir, I must confess."

"So I am, because I am so sure. But I think you will not deny the truth of what I have said. I don't think that either you or I has quite enough of credulity to be thus led away by a blind and foolish mania. You are acquainted with a youth named Lucian Willis?"

Roger Lyon started at this remark, and after some hesitation, he said:

"You have commenced, sir, and until I can understand you plainly I will remain silent."

"Then, sir—plainly—would you not like to have this same Lucian Willis, and his mother, put out of the way?"

"I should, if they are dangerous to community," replied the merchant.

"But why not, if they are dangerous to our own interests?"

"Go on, sir."

At first Mr. Lowton looked a little touched at this continued non-committalism, but soon a faint smile broke over his features, and after awhile, he said:

"Very well, sir; you shall after this have no occasion for misunderstanding me. I heard that it was you who had first complained of one Laura Burke, and that she was confined somewhere upon your promises; but that on the second night of her durance here, she was rescued by Lucian Willis. A Mr. Bixby told me this. And he also informed me that you had sworn to be revenged upon this youngster. Now both the youth and his mother are in my way, and I should be glad to help remove them. Now am I understood?"

"Yes, sir," returned Lyon, emphatically.

"And can you propose something that will tend to accomplish our object?"

Mr. Lyon did not answer at once. He pondered a few moments, and finally he answered:

"You have been frank and plain, and I think I may trust you. Yet this youth is not so much in my way as you may have supposed; but I will lend my assistance towards removing him, nevertheless. Though it seems to me that there are ways enough in which to dispose of such affairs."

"Ay, so there are, sir; but in this case we must adopt some method which shall not create too much excitement. The knife would do the work, but there is something in the presence of blood which causes a little too much tumult among the people. You know two heads are better than one, and with your assistance I may arrive at some concluding method."

"How is *poison*?" suggested Lyon, trembling slightly; for not yet had he fairly worked up his mind to deliberate murder.

"There is a difficulty in the way," returned Lowton, nervously. (He concluded not to reveal the attempt he had made in that fashion.) "I have thought that we might get them off somewhere, and then put such a stop to their breathing as best suited the opportunity of the occasion. You are best acquainted with their places of visiting, and enjoy the most favorable opportunities of finding out their intended movements. Now I am not acquainted with any one here whom I would dare to trust, and there is an objection to my going near them for any preliminary purpose, for, to tell the truth, they know me, and, I am confident, mistrust, at least, that I am not their friend. But if you could manage to get them out somewhere—away from the town—I think I could do the rest."

"What—alone?"

"I might not be alone in the work; but I will be responsible."

"But you should confide in me, sir. Just now you said you were unacquainted with any one whom you could trust, and now you say, or rather intimate—"

"Hold, sir," interrupted Lowton, "I know what you mean, and I will explain. Not far from here are a couple of Indians who will help me in anything of this kind for money. But you see at once that they would not be the men to make themselves visible here for the purpose of leading Willis and his mother away from home. You will see that by working together we can accomplish more than by working separately, for in this latter case we may clash with each other."

"I understand," returned the merchant, "but I must have time to think of this."

"How long?"

"Well, say to-morrow evening."

"And will you try and have something planned out by that time?"

"Yes—I will."

"Then I will be here at the same hour on which I called this evening."

Shortly after this Mr. Bion Lowton took his leave, and Roger Lyon was once more alone; and as soon as the sound of retreating footsteps had ceased he fell into a profound meditation. It was evident that his visitor had some weighty reason for wishing to be rid of the presence of the widow and her son; and also that he wished the work done as speedily as possible. Now it would have suited him well to have had this man go on and do the fatal work, for he knew that Lucian held the secret whereby his character could be ruined, and other difficulties, too, he apprehended from the youth, the most important of which were connected with his daughter.

Roger Lyon may not have had enough of brute courage to do a downright murder; but the wish was in his soul, and he soon convinced himself that it would be no worse to entice the widow and her son off for some one else to destroy them, than it was to bring a false complaint against an innocent girl—innocent of all else but of danger to him—for the purpose of compassing her ruin.

That was a strange method of reasoning, but so Roger Lyon did reason; and so he made up his mind to help his strange visitor out with his work. He seemed to take it for granted that what he had once done was not too bad to be repeated.

But he was cut short in this reverie by the entrance of Agnes. She looked pale and wan, and one or two shades upon her fair face seemed to indicate fright.

"Ah—you've come, have you?" said the father, looking up. "I thought you were to be here an hour ago?"

"But you had company, father, and I thought I would not disturb you."

The maiden managed to get through with this sentence without betraying much emotion, but a close observer could have seen that she was very deeply moved by something.

"How did you know I had company?" the father asked, quickly.

"I saw him come in."

"Ah—yes—I did have a caller. It is late now. I will see you again."

Agnes waited to hear no more. She made her way to her own room, where she threw on an old cloak and hood, and then she made her way out from the house, being careful that no one saw her. With quick steps she glided through the moonlit streets until she reached the cottage where lived the Widow Willis and her son. She saw a light in the sitting-room, and with a nervous movement she sounded the small, brazen knocker upon the door. Lucian himself answered the summons, for he was the only one up in the house.

"—sh!" uttered the maiden, catching the youth's extended hand. "Make no noise. Let no one know that I am here."

"But why is this, dearest?" Lucian uttered in reply. "What is it? Here—come in—my mother has retired."

Without speaking further, Agnes followed her lover into the sitting-room, and there she sank into a chair. Lucian sat down by her side and placed one arm about her neck.

"Now tell me what has happened, Agnes?" he said, anxiously. "You look frightened."

"I must speak quickly, Lucian, for I would not be missed," the maiden said, in hurried, but clear tones. "But first, assure me that my father shall not be harmed. O, let me hear it from your lips, that you will not expose him?"

"You have the assurance, dear Agnes. Now speak!"

"There has been a man to see my father to-night, and his business is to get you and your mother killed. He wants my father to help him in some way; but my father would not tell him yes, though he promised to see him again to-morrow night. I went up to see my father, and I heard voices in his room. I heard your name pronounced, and I could not leave there till I knew all."

"And do you know who this man was?"

"Yes—his name was Lowton."

"Ah! I thought so. He has tried once to kill us. But how does he mean to work now?"

"He told my father he had two Indians who would do anything for money, and if any way could be contrived to get you and your mother away from home, he could easily manage the rest. O, you understand now. He means to kill you as soon as he can. You will remember the Indians; and you will let no one get you away from your house."

"Bless you, Agnes, for this. You may have saved my life now, for many simple things might have called me unprepared from home. But fear not now."

"You say this same man tried to kill you once. Why is it? Why does he wish so?"

"As true as I live, Agnes, I cannot tell you. I have not the least idea of his reason for the deed. I never saw him until since he has been here now, nor did I ever hear his name before. It is unaccountable to me—entirely so."

"It is very strange, isn't it? But you will be careful, Lucian. O, if you are taken from me—"

The youth caught the noble girl to his bosom as she thus spoke, and in joyful accents he cried:

"Fear has no home in my soul while thou art held so fondly and confidingly there. Yet, Agnes, I will be careful, for life is worth cherishing indeed when the prize of the future is so invaluable. I will not lisp a word that can betray your father; but yet—pardon me for the words, methinks, such things should let loose the cord that binds you to him in obedience."

"I will obey him in all things right, but not in this last command. O, I cannot lie to my own soul, nor perjure myself before God. By his own permission did I once pledge my heart and hand to you, and he can no more sunder us now than he can snap the bands between husband and wife. So do I look upon it. But I must go now. Beware, Lucian! God protect you. Adieu."

With one sweet kiss the lovers separated—the one to return to the home which was growing darker and darker to her; and the other to ponder upon the strange thing he had just learned.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

HOW TO OPEN OYSTERS.

"Talk of opening oysters," said old Hurricane, "why, nothing's easier, if you only know how."

"And how's how?" inquired Starlight.

"Scotch snuff," answered old Hurricane, very sententiously. "Scotch snuff. Bring a little of it ever so near their noses, and they'll sneeze their lids off."

"I know a genius," observed Meister Karl, "who has a better plan. He spreads the bivalves in a circle, seats himself in the centre, and begins spinning a yarn. Sometimes it's an adventure in Mexico—sometimes a legend of his love—sometimes a marvellous stock operation in Wall Street. As he proceeds, the 'natives' get interested—one by one they gape with astonishment at the tremendous and direful whoppers which are poured forth, and as they gape, my friend whips them out, peppers 'em and swallows them."

"That'll do," said Starlight, with a long sigh. "I wish we had a bushel of the bivalves here now, they'd open easy."—*Philadelphia Post.*

IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

Jean Blanc, of New Orleans, represented to be an agriculturist of considerable scientific attainments, has secured letters patent from the United States for the discovery of a process of converting thirty different varieties of plants, which grow wild in enormous quantities in various sections of the Union, into flax of great strength and beautiful texture. Specimens are now in New York, and among them are said to be the flax made from the stalks of the cotton plant, large quantities of which are burned on the Southern plantations to get them out of the way; the century tree, or wild Manilla, which grows in abundance in Florida; the wild hollyhock, with a fibre ten to fifteen feet long; the gold nankeen, of a natural nankeen color; the vegetable silk, and the vegetable wool.—*Western Enterprise.*

SENSIBILITIES OF THE BRAIN.

Extreme emaciation, produced by low diet and exhausting diseases, is highly injurious to the brain. Great mental depression, and even in some cases insanity, are generally produced by the exhausted and bloodless condition arising from protracted abstinence, exhausting diseases, blood-letting, hemorrhage, or any cause by which the quantity of blood is greatly reduced and its quality impaired. A copious supply of good blood enables the brain to nourish itself properly, diminishes its irritability, and prevents those degenerations of its substance which are apt to occur in all impoverished constitutions.—*Hall.*

RAILWAYS IN INDIA.

The progress of railways in India exceeds all anticipation. The line of 1000 miles from Calcutta to Delhi, for which government gave the land, is advancing at each extremity. One hundred and twenty-five miles from Calcutta to Ranegungee are open; and another seventy-five miles, to Rajamahal, will soon be ready. The four hundred miles from Delhi to Allahabad are to be finished in 1857. To travel between those two cities at present takes four days and nights, and costs $125; but by rail it will be a journey of twenty-four hours, at a charge of $30. The whole line is to be completed in 1859.—*Boston Journal.*

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

WHO'LL PLANT FLOWERS ON MY GRAVE?

BY VINA VAUGHAN.

When I am dead and buried,
Who'll bend above my grave?—
Thus often I have queried—
The grave with tears to lave?
Who'll come and plant bright flowers,
Sweet flowers, o'er my tomb,
In the long summer hours,
To take away its gloom?

And when, from all earth's pleasures
I shall have passed away,
'Tis sweet to hope some loved one
By my lone grave will stay;
And, coming there at evening,
To weep away an hour,
Will spend the quiet dawning
In planting there a flower.

I muse in the gray twilight,
And in the midnight deep;
I'm thinking in the starlight,
When others are asleep.
And this I'm wishing ever,
That, when I'm dead and gone,
Some one will plant sweet flowers
Beside my funeral stone.

The bright and pretty flowers!
May guardian angels save
Them from the rude destroyer,
And plant them on my grave.
I care not for proud mourners,
And endless, careless train,
If *one* will plant sweet flowers,
When spring shall come again.

When grief and care oppressing,
Weigh heavy on my heart,
Hope whispers, there's an ending
To this life's stinging smart;
It is in yonder churchyard,
When thou shalt sleep below
A little mound of grassy earth,
And flowers above thee grow.

I'm dreaming of the future,
When Death shall lay his hand
Upon my wrinkled forehead,
And I shall join the band
Of corpses in yon churchyard,
And in the grave sleep low;
Who'll plant bright flowers on it,
And watch them as they grow?

When peacefully I slumber
In the graveyard cold and dim,
Let breezes sing above me,
And chant my requiem;
And when my wearied spirit
From earthly sorrow 's free,
I'll whisper to some dear one,
Plant flowers over me.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

POVERTY AND WEALTH.

BY ELLA FORREST.

"I WISH you would step into Hammond's, on your way home to-night, and get a set of corals for Edith. Poor little thing! it is too bad her neck and arms are so bitten by the mosquitoes. You send home a mosquito-net to-day—will you? Mother thinks it is ridiculous we should let her be so bitten, when a few dollars would prevent it." Scarcely waiting for a reply, and without noticing that her husband's face was clouded by an anxious, serious look, Mrs. Mendon went on: "When Edith and I go to Newport, this season, I hope you will be able to leave your business with the clerks for a few weeks, at least, and be with us. It's so dreary, only to see you once or twice a week."

"I don't think I can go to Newport at all, this season, it is so expensive. And then my business has been very poor, hardly paying for itself of late."

"Can't go at all? Mother said yesterday she thought we'd better go very soon, as I haven't been very well, and Edith looks so pale. I don't know what she'd think to hear you say we can't go at all," said Mrs. Mendon.

"I can't help what she thinks. I have all I can do to pay my bills, and keep my head above water, now, and I can't go to any extra expense to please anybody. I newly furnished the parlors, last spring, and hired another servant, to please you, because your mother thought best; but I can't go to Newport this season, and that's all there is about it," said Mr. Mendon, in a very decided tone.

"*I* could give it up, Charles, and not feel badly, only so many of our friends are going. Then mother always feels so sad, and says so much about it, when I'm deprived of a comfort or pleasure, on account of our limited means," said Mrs. Mendon, in a peevish way.

"I am sorry to hear you say that again, Ellen," said Mr. Mendon. "Do you think more of your mother, and of pleasing her, than you do of me?"

"Of course I don't; but I can't bear to have her complain of you. I wish we were rich—then I should be happy. If you had been contented to stay in California a little longer, perhaps we might now have been as rich as Tom Mason."

"Good heavens, Ellen, you drive me mad. Mason was base enough to gamble, and shrewd enough to cheat everybody that came in his way. That's how he got his money. Would you like to have me do that?"

"I didn't know how he made his money. Mother said that Mason, who went to California when you did, had now returned home with great wealth, bought and furnished a splendid house, and was now living in great style."

"Having a fine house, and living in great style, is all you think about, I believe, Ellen. But these would never make us happy—no, nor anything else, so long as your mother meddles so much with our affairs, and you think more of her opinion than of mine."

"Why, Charles, I never heard you talk so before! What does it mean?"

"I know you never heard me talk so. I have borne insult after insult, and have never said anything; but I have thought, you may well believe. How came I to come home, and leave Mason in California? Every letter I received while there, was filled with some dreadful tale about you, or dear little Hattie that's gone, and what a dreadful thing for you to be left so. Then your mother (unknown to you, I suppose,) wrote me a long letter herself, saying she thought you would live but a short time, your health was so poor. I waited not a moment, but left, just as I had begun to do something (for then it took much longer to get under way, than it does now). And how often has it been thrown in my face that so much money was spent, and so little earned, in those two years?" said Mr. Mendon, his face coloring, and his voice assuming quite an angry tone.

Mrs. Mendon was by this time venting her own feelings by a flood of tears, for this was the first time her husband had ever complained of her mother. And without trying to soothe her, or dry up her tears, Mr. Mendon left his home, and walked towards his store.

"How do you do? Why, I should as soon have thought of meeting my old grandfather in the city, as you, Jones," said Mr. Mendon, as he met an old acquaintance from the country. "What, pray, can have brought you here?"

"The love of gold, I suppose, friend Mendon, and I expect it will carry me a great deal further, too."

"What, you are not going to California, are you?"

"Yes, and I only wish you were going, too."

"I going? I wish I was going somewhere—anywhere. I'm sick of living here, or trying to live."

"Come, then, make up your mind, and be off with me to-night?"

"O, don't mention it. I couldn't do any such thing, Jones. Do you start to-night?"

"Yes, for New York, and from there to-morrow, I suppose."

"Come into the store, Jones. I want to have a chat with you, for I've not heard from the friends in your vicinity for a long time."

But Mr. Mendon had other business to attend to; as he entered his counting-room, a gentleman was waiting.

"Can you settle this bill this morning, Mr. Mendon?"

"How much is it?" said he, taking the bill. "Seventy-five dollars. I have a note due to-morrow—if you could wait till next week, Mr. Twist, it would accommodate me very much."

"Very well, sir," said Mr. Twist, quite satisfied with Mr. Mendon's promise to pay next week, for he well knew he would fulfil it, if possible.

"I shall hardly be able to settle with Twist next week, after all," thought Mr. Mendon, "for I have another note due, and my rent to pay. I am really discouraged. Seventy-five dollars! Just what I gave Ellen yesterday to purchase her shawl, a thing she didn't need—no, nor she wouldn't have thought so, either, but Mrs. Martin and Mrs. Bailey had one, and then nothing would satisfy Ellen's mother but for her to have one, too. And now I must study and calculate, make promises and be dunned. Ellen ought to be more independent, more considerate, think a little of consulting my wishes, and of living within my means, not always expect me to buy this and that (no matter about the cost), just because her mother thinks she needs them. I can't live so, and it's no use to think about it longer. I'm tempted to go off with Jones and leave Ellen and her mother to manage matters as they please."

Thus mused Mendon, as he stood gazing out of his counting-room window, which only served to increase the anger with which he left his home in the morning. He sat down, trembling with excitement, and wrote a note to his wife in the most hasty manner, stating that unexpected business had called him to New York, therefore she needn't expect him home that night.

He arrived in New York in the morning, and before he had time to cool his passion, and repent his rash measure, the steamer was ready to leave for California. He merely wrote a line to his wife, which run thus:

"DEAR ELLEN:—While you read this, I am far away on the broad ocean, in the steamer ———, bound for California. I have left all I possess with you, except enough to buy my ticket. CHARLES."

Mrs. Mendon was an only daughter, and though her father was kind, and inclined to be indulgent, he died when she was very young, leaving her to the sole care of her mother, a stern, rigid woman, who held the reins of government tightly, but like Queen Elizabeth, without their being felt to be so.

She seldom indulged her daughter, but taught her to think and act as she directed, without consulting her own inclinations at all. And unfortunately she married and settled quite near her mother; therefore she still consulted her, and knew not how to do or say anything contrary to her wishes, to gratify herself or please her husband.

On the morning we have described, after her husband left, Mrs. Mendon soon managed to dry up her tears, and then resolved never again to quote her mother in any matter that should in the least irritate her husband, and by her cheerfulness at noon she hoped they would both be able to forget the unhappy affair of the morning.

"What is the matter, Ellen, that makes you look so grave?" said her mother, as she entered at this moment. "Is Edith sick?"

"No, nothing is the matter, only my head aches, and I've been trying to sew."

"I met Miss Dillaway last evening, and engaged her to come and make your dresses next week; and, as it is so pleasant this morning, I think we'd better go out and purchase them."

"My head aches, mother, and Edith don't seem very well, so I think I'd better not go out to-day," replied Mrs. Mendon, in a timid voice.

She had not the courage or the independence to say that she shouldn't need the dresses, that her husband didn't think of going to Newport, and so forth; therefore, she allowed herself to be censured for giving up to a little headache, and for putting off, till the last minute, those things that might be done at once just as well.

Thankful was Mrs. Mendon when she found herself alone again. "O, dear," sighed she, "I wish I could please Charles and mother too. I know I offended him this morning, and I feel so unhappy about it, and now I've offended her. I seem never to be allowed to have a wish of my own, but I'll not think of this now," thought Mrs. Mendon, "for I'm determined to appear happy and cheerful, when Charles comes home, and try, if possible, to heal the wound of the morning. But why is Charles so late? It's nearly an hour past his usual hour for return. There he is, and I'll run myself to answer the bell."

She started back in astonishment to meet one of the clerks (instead of her husband), who handed her the note before mentioned, and shuddered as she opened it, for a shadow of something undefinable fell upon her. The day passed sorrowfully away, and the night fell gloomily around the troubled wife.

"He'll come to-morrow," said she, as the first ray of morning peeped into her window. Still she felt sad. "What could have called him to New York so suddenly, that he couldn't come home to see Edith and me before starting?" thought Mrs. Mendon; "he must have known I should feel anxious."

To-morrow came; but instead of the looked-for husband came a letter, which, though it contained but few lines, conveyed much. Mrs. Mendon read it over and over again, doubting what her eyes beheld.

"It's not like him. He would never do so. Somebody else has sent this to me." And half frantic, she started for the store, to ascertain what she could of his strange departure.

She found them all collected in the counting-room, evidently conversing on some very exciting subject. The story was soon told. A letter had just been received at the store, which contained the strange intelligence that Mendon was then far away, and instructions to Marsh, the head clerk, to settle up his business in the best way he could, and after paying his debts, give what should be left to his wife.

"How could he leave little Edith and me?" Thus thought Mrs. Mendon, much grieved, and her pride not a little wounded. "What shall I do?"

She had just resolved to consult her mother less, but now the one whom she ought ever to have consulted was gone, and she could only go to her and tell her troubles. Mrs. Walton, her mother, was in the greatest rage imaginable.

"One thing is certain, Ellen," said she. "He don't care anything about you or little Edith, else he would never leave you in this way. Depend upon it, there is something wrong somewhere (not dreaming she had had any influence in the matter). But don't sit down and cry, till you make yourself sick, Ellen. You must do the best you can, with what he has left for you. You'd better give up your house at once, and come home with me."

Ellen did so, giving up both her servants, for she was thought able to take care of Edith herself, now, and there was no more said about Newport, notwithstanding she was troubled by debility, and Edith looked pale.

Mr. Mendon had now been gone six months, during which time several letters had been received; but now Ellen was quite overjoyed to learn that he had been very fortunate, and in his next, designed sending for a draft for a considerable amount.

Ellen didn't rejoice because she wanted the money to spend—no, for she had learned, and was encouraged to practise the strictest economy now; but she could scarce endure longer the censure against her husband, and hear the same repeated morning and evening.

The two weeks (which were to elapse ere he sent the letter) passed rapidly and joyfully away, but no letter came; and two and two again were numbered with the past, when Ellen, with great delight, received and carefully opened her letter. But alas! it contained no draft—no, but a long account of a severe fit of sickness, occasioned by the climate and exposure, and the great expense attending his sickness. He wrote in a very desponding strain, and ended by saying that to stay where he was would soon end his days, and as soon as he could make arrangements, and his health would admit, he should return home.

"He's coming home," said Ellen, smiling through her tears, as her eyes fell upon the word "home."

"Coming home!" exclaimed Mrs. Walton. "He has no home to come to. He left you, and I have taken you home; but I can never take him too, sick and penniless as he will be. He'd better stay there till he gets better, and then see if he can't do something, and I should tell him so, if I were his wife."

"It is so strange," thought Ellen, "when mother has so much property, which of course I shall have some time, that she is so determined Charles shall make a fortune, even at the risk of his life, and say too, in such a decided tone, that he can't come to live with her, till his health has improved, and he is able to do business again! But if he comes home, and is without money, what can we do?" thought Ellen, in great trouble. "We couldn't live here, among our old acquaintances, but should be obliged to go to some other place, and he take the situation of a clerk, or worse still, he might have to work at his trade, which he learned when a boy. I think I must write him at once, and explain how it would be, and try to encourage him to stay awhile longer, till he has acquired a little, at least. Perhaps he is quite well and strong even now."

Had he been so, even when he *read* her letter, the advice it contained had been received quite differently. But his sickness had been severe; and it was long before he could stand under a burning sun, without great pain and dizziness. After his first day's labor, he came into the rough place he and his companions called a house, and threw himself upon the floor, weary, exhausted, aching in every limb, and sick at heart, saying, as he did so:

"I wouldn't ask to live another day, but for my wife and child. It's horrible to feel as I have to-day, and know that I must work, or starve."

"O, don't be discouraged, Mendon," said young Randall, a noble-hearted fellow, who was ever ready to pity and help the suffering, "you will feel better after you have some supper, and I have it most ready. Better still, here comes Joe Smith with letters for some of us. Cheer up, Mendon, one for you from home, all full of little nice sayings, of course. I wish I had a wife, or anybody to send me a letter," said Randall, who had from his earliest remembrance been an orphan.

Mendon began reading his letter, but instead of becoming more cheerful, he threw it down and buried his face in his hands; for much as men despise tears, when sickness has enfeebled them, and repeated defeat drank up their courage, a few of these "signs of weakness" may glitter upon the cheek and dim the eye.

"Is it possible," thought Mendon, "that Ellen could advise me to stay, when I told her plainly that I could live but a short time! Then, too, to say we couldn't live among our old acquaintances, unless I make a fortune here! That shows how much regard she has for me. Well, she's told me to stay now, and I *will* stay till I am rich, or die! But she'll not hear from me again very soon, nor shall she ever enjoy a fortune with me, unless I am convinced that she has changed her ideas a little, and is willing to live with me, even in poverty, regardless of her mother's opinion, or that of those old acquaintances, as she calls them."

Mrs. Mendon waited with greater anxiety than usual for her husband's next letter; but she waited in vain. Months passed by, and no news from him. None could conjecture the cause of his long silence, till a paragraph appeared in one of the morning papers (taken from a California paper), announcing the death of "C. Mendon, from Massachusetts." There were no particulars—not even the town or city of his former residence was mentioned; still, none doubted that Charles Mendon, of Boston, was the said "C. Mendon."

Mrs. Mendon was frantic with grief for many weeks. She felt that his life had been one of toil and care, and feared—ay, she knew that she had not tried to lighten his burden, and throw sunshine in his path, as it was her duty, and ought to have been her pleasure. But repentance came too late, and mingling with her grief at the loss of her husband, it cast a shadow over her life, and even made it a burden to her.

Mrs. Walton never mentioned his name from the day she learned his death, but tried by every means to divert the mind of her daughter. She gazed on her and her little child with a troubled heart, for she could expect to live but a few years, as her health and strength failed daily.

A year had now passed since Mrs. Mendon had worn the sable dress of a widow, but her heart mourned the lost one with the same deep grief of the day she learned his death.

"Ellen," said her mother, as they were alone in her chamber, "perhaps when I tell you what I have always endeavored to conceal from you, and every one else, you may be induced to act differently in this matter, and treat Melden less coldly."

"But I can never love him, mother. I can never regard him as other than my cousin."

"But he is not your cousin exactly, Ellen, though you have always called him so. You ought to feel flattered by his preference for you, rather than treat it indifferently, for he is from one of the first families in the city of ———. His father was one of its richest and most influential men, and though he lost a large portion of his wealth, Melden is now worth enough to make a good appearance in the world, and live easy."

"But mother," said Ellen, the tears filling her eyes, "I can never marry Melden Ashley, or any one else."

"Perhaps you will think differently, when I tell you all. Your father, at his death, had in his possession a vast amount of real estate; he had been very rich, but entering largely into speculation, he lost much, and at his death was much in debt. But I had the widow's claim upon his real estate that remained unsold. These houses, and the property you have always supposed mine, will at my death go to your father's creditors. This must account for many things which may have seemed strange to you."

"Does Melden know this, mother?"

"No, I presume not; but you can't think that in seeking you, he thinks of *my* money, for he has enough of his own, and you have no right, child, to doubt his sincerity."

"But I don't love him, mother, and I don't wish to marry. The more I think of the matter, the further I am from it."

"Listen to me now, Ellen; it is my last request. I can live but a short time, and I can't think of leaving you in the condition you must be in, if you still persist. That the daughter of George Walton must be a beggar, is to me more dreadful than the pangs of death. But I doubt not you will do as I wish, and that I shall see you and Melden united in marriage before that sad day," said the mother.

Mrs. Mendon made no reply to these last words, for they fell like stunning blows upon her humbled heart, and she left the chamber that she might weep over her troubles alone, as usual. A few weeks from this time we find her again lone and sorrowful.

"Mother's last request," said she, "yes, and my last obedience my last act. I have ever done as she requested, but this will end my life. Why do I now think so much of my dear, dear lost husband? Why do I dream of him every night such bright dreams? O, I would rather live with him in a hut, than with Melden in a palace."

"Why are you looking so gloomy and sad, Ellen?" said her cousin Fanny, as she entered the room at this moment. "I thought everybody was laughing and gay at the bridal hour."

"I don't know why I feel sad, Fanny," said Ellen, "but I do, and can't help it. There seems such a shadow over my life, the future looks so dark, so uncertain, and seems filled with such fearful forebodings, I dare not proceed into it. I feel as if I was leaving everything beautiful and lovely forever. The rustling of the leaves on that old maple, the rippling of the fountain, and the ticking of the clock, seem whispering farewell to me."

"Nonsense, Ellen," said Fanny, "for you to feel so. If you don't dry up your tears, and look gay at once, I'll call Melden, and tell him about you. He's cheerful enough, I assure you.'

"I can't be gay, Fanny. I just went into the chamber where lay all my bridal attire, and such a chill as ran over me, at that sight! Had it been my coffin and shroud, it couldn't have made me feel worse. But I'll save you the trouble of calling Melden, for I'm going to call him myself, and have our marriage put off till to-morrow evening."

"How strangely you talk, Ellen. Your friends are all invited, and what reason could you give for putting it off till to-morrow?"

The clock chimed out the hour of eight, and Mrs. Mendon, pale and trembling, stood beside her lover, and the good man commenced the ceremony that unites hands and destinies forever. At this moment, the door bell rang, and Sally, fearing some guest would find himself too late for the wedding, hastened to open the door. But to her astonishment, she saw a rough-looking and very poorly-clad man, whom she took to be a beggar, or purchaser of old boots and clothes, and was about to shut the door in his face, when he inquired if Mrs. Ellen Mendon lived there.

"Yes," said Sally, "she lives here, but you can't see her to-night, for she is just being married," and she made another effort to shut the door.

"Being married!" exclaimed the man; and he burst open the door, and rushed into the parlor, which he had observed was brilliantly lighted.

None knew him except Mrs. Mendon, who shrieked, "my husband!" and rushed to meet him just as the words were trembling upon the lips of the good parson that would have made her Mrs. Ashley; but she fainted and fell.

"Begone, villain!" said several, who didn't even now dream who it was.

"No, not till my wife bids me go!" said he, in such a tone none dared approach him; and he raised the prostrate woman, who seemed revived sufficiently to whisper:

"Am I dreaming? or is it you, Charles, and are you alive?"

"Alive, Ellen? Did you suppose I was dead?"

"We heard so, more than a year ago."

He now assisted her in reaching a chair, near the window, and then glanced round the room for his little Edith, fearing to ask for her, lest during his absence she had been laid beside his darling Hattie.

"Are you looking for Edith?" said Mrs. Mendon. "She was not quite well to-night, and Sally has put her in her little bed. Would you like to see her?"

After kissing his little child over and over again, he said:

"Ellen, how unfortunate that I returned, and thus deprived you of the honor of being connected with the Ashley family, and the comforts of the wealth Melden possesses!"

"That honor and wealth would have been dearly bought, Charles. I would rather live in poverty while I do live."

"Ellen, you know nothing about poverty. Could you dress to correspond with the garments I have on, and leave this beautiful house, for a few rooms?"

"Yes, to be with you, I will with pleasure go anywhere, and live as your means may permit."

"But what will your mother and your friends say?" replied Mr. Mendon.

"I care not what they say," replied she, with great earnestness. "I have listened to them too long, and have learned by bitter experience that a wife, to be happy, must forsake her friends, and live for her husband."

Mr. Mendon now rose to his feet, threw off his coarse garments, untied his faded cravat, wiped his face, and took a shabby wig from his head, and the handsome, finely-dressed Charles Mendon then caressed his wife tenderly, and whispered to her his plans for the enjoyment of the great wealth, with which he had returned, all of which he had obtained honestly.

"And now let us never mention, but forget the dark and gloomy past, from which I hope we have both learned a profitable lesson."

The guests soon dispersed, after Mr. and Mrs. Mendon left the parlor. Mrs. Walton found herself quite exhausted after the excitement of the wedding, and her disappointment and anger, when her daughter threw herself into the arms of a beggar, as she supposed. And Melden Ashley has ever since believed there is some truth in the homely saying of our grandmothers, that "there is many a slip 'twixt cup and lip."

HALLUCINATIONS OF GREAT MEN.

Spiello, who has painted the Fall of the Angels, thought he was haunted by the frightful devils which he had depicted. One of our artists, who was much engaged in painting caricatures, became haunted by the distorted faces he drew; and the deep melancholy and terror which accompanied these apparitions, caused him to commit suicide. Miller, who executed the copper plate of the Sistine Madonna, had more lovely visions. Towards the close of his life, the virgin appeared to him, and thanking him for the affection he had shown her, invited him to follow her to heaven. To achieve this, the artist starved himself to death. Beethoven, who became completely deaf in the decline of life, often heard his sublime compositions performed distinctly. It is related of Ben Jonson, that he spent the whole of one night in regarding his great toe, around which he saw Tartars, Turks, Romans and Catholics climbing up and fighting. Goetue, when out riding one day, was surprised to see an exact image of himself on horseback, dressed in a light colored coat, riding towards him.—*Historical Researches.*

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M. M. BALLOU, *Publisher*,
Corner of Tremont and Bromfield Sts., Boston.

[Written for The Flag of ur Union.]

WINTRY KNELS.

BY J. RAY BARROS

They are ringing, ringing, ringing
Through the leafless, sapless tre;
And the birds have hushed their sging,
For they mourn the summer's loss.

They are moaning, moaning, moanig,
In the sober, solemn pines;
Like a guilty spirit groaning
For the peace it never finds.

They are wailing, wailing, wailing,
As they whistle madly by;
And the fitful clouds are sailing
Athwart the leaden sky.

They are shrieking, shrieking, shrieking,
In a weird and fearful tone;
Like a guilty spirit speaking,
Whose last fond hope is gone.

They are sighing, sighing, sighing,
In the distance—far away;
Like a faithful Christian dying,
Whose lamp has burned away.

They are whistling, whistling, whistling,
Through the frost-king's glittering gems;
And the leafless trees are bristling
With their pearly diadems.

They are telling, telling, telling,
Of the bright day yet in store;
When the buds will all be swelling,
And old winter's reign is o'er.

[Translated from the French for The Flag of our Union.]

THE MADAGASCAR IDOL.

BY ANNE T. WILBUR.

The ship Maple was on a voyage from the Isle of France to Sumatra. It was conveying furniture from the Rue Vivienne and the Faubourg St. Antoine to the nabobs of the Isles of Sunda, to demand in exchange coffee for Tortoni's. The sea was fearfully calm! The sea is a singular thing! Its repose is as terrible as its anger; it was then as smooth as a mirror beneath the keel of the Maple. The sailors said, "What terribly fine weather!" and they gnawed their fists. The captain put the crew on allowance; this is a state of siege in vessels. They had exhausted the biscuit, the salt beef, the poultry, the chocolate and the conserves of Colin, that visible providence of the famished sailor. Ascension day arrived. How should this fete be celebrated? Every nook and corner of the Maple was searched; there was a famine everywhere. Meanwhile the cook, a Madagascar negro, named Neptune, found a chicken perched on a yard; it was soon despoiled of its feathers, and the crew prepared for a repast. They were soon rejoicing over the odor of the spit; the passengers were inhaling it stealthily, and the captain was taking his siesta during the preparations for dinner, cheating hunger by sleep. The lieutenant was hovering around the kitchen, to repulse the violent temptations of hunger, always a bad counsellor: *malesuada fames*. A heart-rending cry of despair, a cry like that of a negro bitten by a serpent, shook the metallic kitchen where the chicken was roasting. Neptune, turning pale with affright beneath the ebony of his countenance, rushed from the office, his hands clenching his curly locks. The crew thought the cook had eaten the chicken, and that he was asking pardon for having satisfied the demands of his stomach. Alas! the poor cook had not committed this crime! Excessive attention often brings about the same result with negligence, in the domain of cooks. The chicken, our last resource, was burnt from head to foot, burnt to a coal.

O, how terrible is a fit of anger beneath the hot sun of the equator! The lieutenant uttered the cry of a tiger cheated of his prey, and seizing a large knife, precipitated himself upon Neptune. At the same moment a passenger, Louis Bergar, threw himself before the negro to ward off the mortal blow. The negro was saved, but Bergar received the point of the steel in his arm, and blood stained the deck of the Maple. If the passengers had not, in their turn, restrained Bergar, all wounded as he was, he would have thrown the lieutenant into the sea. As for poor Neptune, he fell at the feet of his deliverer, and bathed them with tears of gratitude. After this scene, the crew and passengers of the Maple became resigned, and continued to suffer the horrors of hunger until they reached Sumatra.

Four years passed away; Louis Bergar was dining at the table d'hote of the English boarding house, at Batavia. There were among the guests, two *savants* and a philanthropist, commissioned by the various governments. At the dessert, the name of Bergar having been pronounced in a loud and intelligible tone, the eldest of the *savants*, until this moment bending over his plate, hastily raised his head and said:

"Who is named Bergar, here?"

"I," replied my friend.

"Ah, it is droll!" said the *savant*. "You have the same name as one of the gods in Madagascar."

"Is there a god named Bergar?" said Bergar, smiling.

"Bergar," said the *savant*, "B. E. R. G. A. R."

"A false god, doubtless?" said the other *savant*.

"Of course," remarked the philosopher.

The next day at the same hour, the *savant* handed Bergar a number of the Asiatic Review, and said to him:

"Here is what I wrote at Madagascar on the god Bergar, in a letter sent to the learned societies of London and Paris; you can keep this copy as a souvenir."

Bergar thanked the *savant* and read this article:

"The population of Madagascar presents a mixture of Africans, Arabs and Madecasses; the latter people the greater part of the kingdom of the Ovas which is governed by a queen. The Madecasses differ from the European race by very distinct moral and physical characteristics. They are mild, humane and hospitable, but extremely warlike, because war gives them slaves. It is an error to assert that the Madecasses adore the devil, and that they have at Teintinque a tree consecrated to this divinity. The Madecasses have but one temple; it is dedicated to the god Bergar (Ber, *spring* or *well*, from the Chaldean, and Gar, *light*, from the Madecasse); they are devoted to this divinity, and sacrifice chickens to it as the Greeks did a cock to Esculapius. So true is it that superstitions and languages are linked among themselves by a mysterious chain, which seas, mountains and centuries have never been able to break!"

This last philosophical reflection struck my friend Bergar.

"You can scarcely imagine," said the *savant*, "how much science is indebted to these resemblances, discovered by us at the expense of much fatigue! Who would have suspected that the word *ber*, the fundamental word of the Hebrew language, would have arrived from Adam to Madagascar? Let us bow before these mysteries and be silent!"

Bergar bowed and was silent. The cares of business soon made him forget both the article and the *savant*.

A few months after this incident of Indian life, Bergar was on his way to buy ebony at Cape St. Mary, Madagascar, when a tempest forced the vessel in which he was a passenger to put in at Simpai, on the coast of the kingdom of the Ovas. While the crew were repairing the damages to the vessel, Bergar, accompanied by his servant, went into the country to explore. There are no wild beasts at Madagascar; a European may walk securely in the country; there are only terrible fevers which kill a man at once. The forests are full of these intense fevers, but there is not the shadow of a lion.

As a Marseillaise, Bergar gave himself up to the pleasures of the chase in this favored island, where the thrush, the partridge, the quail, the pheasant, are plenty as grasshoppers. On the outskirts of a bamboo forest, our hunter saw some natives prostrated before a large cabin. These natives were chanting a hymn in a drawling tone, and at each refrain the name of Bergar returned so distinctly, that my friend did not lose a syllable of it. "Ah!" said he, "this is the temple of the god Bergar the *savant* at Batavia spoke of."

Bergar was urged by a very natural curiosity; he wished to see the interior of this temple, hoping even to discover the idol Bergar there. This hope was not disappointed. The temple had no ornament in its four walls of bamboo cemented with clay, but at the extremity, there stood on a pedestal, the statue of the god Bergar, and his physiognomy and attitude struck my friend as remarkable.

The god Bergar was not a master-piece of art, but it was much superior in chiselling to the idols of New Zealand; it approached more nearly the sentiment of the European art; was dressed in the European fashion, a thing very rare in an Indo-African god; it wore a broad-brimmed straw hat, a large red Madras cravat, tied in a knot; a blue shirt, full pantaloons and a vest of ticking. It was standing in the attitude of a man who is arresting a murderous blow, and its right arm was spotted with blood. My friend Bergar, on examining the features of this deity, discovered a certain resemblance to his own; like him the god had large whiskers united under his chin; and in 1818, in the Indian sea, my friend Bergar had been the only one who wore a beard in this fashion. As for the costume of the god, it was exactly the same with that of my friend on board the Maple. There was no longer room for doubt, this temple was built in memory of my friend Bergar. All uncertainty on this point was at an end, when Bergar recognized on the neck of the deity his own red cravat, marked L. B. which he had given to Neptune the cook. At this moment a procession of natives entered the temple. They lighted more wood in a chafing dish, deposited a chicken on the flame, and burnt it before the god, amid the acclamations of the worshippers.

My friend Bergar could not retain his serious air before this religious ceremony; he uttered an imprudent burst of laughter which shook the bamboo walls. At this explosion of irreverence, the worshippers of the god Bergar forgot their habitual civility; they precipitated themselves with cries of fury upon my friend, and were preparing to sacrifice him to appease the outraged divinity, when the sound of cymbals announced the arrival of the chief of the tribe. Louis Bergar laughed no more, and in this extreme danger, had recourse to a very excusable hypocrisy; he prostrated himself before the god, and manifested the most lively repentance.

The priest of Bergar received the chief of the tribe at the door of the temple, and made his report on the sacrilege of the European. The chief bounded with rage, and seizing a Malay *crie*, rushed on the infamous profaner.

At the sound of the chief's footsteps my friend hastily turned; cries of surprise were heard, the weapon fell from the black hand which brandished it. The chief was at the feet of my friend Bergar. The priest made a pantomime which signified, "What is this mystery?" and the choir repeated this pantomime as in a ballet.

Louis Bergar raised the chief rolling in the dust, and, pointing to the statue, interrogated him by a gesture. With an energetic sigh, the chief exclaimed:

"Is not Bergar my god?"

"The good Neptune!" said my friend; and he pressed the hand of the ex-cook.

Meanwhile, as the religious customs of the country required, and at the request of Neptune, my friend Bergar, before quitting the temple, prostrated himself devoutly before the statue; he adored it for a few moments, and went out with the ex-cook Neptune, who had invited him to dine at his palace.

On the way, Neptune related his history to Bergar. The powerful Radama, the sovereign of Madagascar, had at last concluded a treaty of peace with his implacable enemy, Reni, that corsair who desolated the island. Reni had a talented wife who was appointed, by an edict of Radama, queen of the Ovas, and this queen was the sister of Neptune, ex-cook of the Maple. Seated on the throne of the Ovas she had taken her brother from private life and given him the absolute government of the little province of Simpai. Invested with this dignity, Neptune built a temple to my friend Bergar; this was his first act of sovereignty. Gratitude is a black virtue, as ingratitude is a white vice.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

TO THE "PICTORIAL" AND "FLAG."

BY MARY N. DEARBORN.

Dear friends ye are missed by the fireside hearth,
When the shadows of evening fall,
And darkness throws o'er hill and dale,
Its strange, mysterious pall.

'Tis then, when faint from the toil of the day,
And sick of its fruitless care,
It has long been my pleasure and profit to taste
The gifts of thy bounteous fare.

Thy viands are costly, and brought from afar,
From distant old kingdoms they come,
And the wine of thy board is spread with the fruit
Of many a sea-circled home!

From the sea-bound shores of the northern main
To the sands of the supny East,
Are gleaned the rich treasures that weekly appear,
And call on the dainty to feast!

Here golden-hued Wit in plenty is shown,
With Truth of the amaranth shade,
While fleet-footed Fun is seen scampering on,
In quest of the laurels he's made!

And here with the kings and nobles of earth,
In converse unbending you meet,
And counted with princes as equal in birth,
You claim with the mighty a seat!

'Tis here that the traveller roameth at will,
Through lands of the myrtle and vine;
From tents of the Cossack encamped by the Don,
To castles that border the Rhine!

In galleries lined with the trophies of art,
Proud gems in the circlets they wear,
These tables are spread, where thousands to-day
Choice dishes of sentiment share!

Come old, and come young, come grave, and come gay,
For each there's a chosen repast,
As consulting the taste of matron and maid—
We aim at the present and past.

And all who have love for the noble and true,
Or need of the light they impart,
Come taste of the bounties Ballou has prepared,
And feast on the beauties of art.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

"PIZEN'D MEAT."

A STORY OF A LOGGING SWAMP.

BY AUSTIN C. BURDICK.

"Let's see," said Tim Smith, just as one of the company had finished a story about a bear hunt, "I believe I never told ye about that pizen'd meat up in the woods last winter."

We assured him we had never heard about it, and he proceeded forthwith to relate it.

"Well," he commenced, "ye see a gang of us went up last winter into the loggin' swamp with old Parker. Our work was right about Umbagog. The boss made two parties on us; one he kept at work on the timber, while the other was building a dam on the stream just above. Me an' Bill French worked at loggin', an' old Sam Hall—the tarnal thief—worked on the dam. Perhaps you know Pete Lombard, well, he worked with Sam. Now you see our camp was close by the lake, while Sam's camp was about half a mile off, on the stream. Both parties had plenty of fish, in tackle, but Sam's gang had no guns, an' we had only two. Howsumever, them two was enough to keep us in game. We got one bear, and as many rabbits as we wanted, and once in a while we got a moose.

"One mornin' we found a moose track close by the camp, an' putting on my snow shoes, an' takin' the old rifle, I set out after him. I found him in the deep snow about half a mile off and shot him. Then all hands on us went out an' fetched him to the camp, where we skun him, an' cut him up. The boys up in the other camp heard on it, but they didn't ask us for any; 'cause ye see, they daresn't. Only a little while afore we got out of meat when they had enough, but they wouldn't let us have a bit. When the moose was all cut up in chunks fit to cook we hung it up close by the door on the outside. Ye see we didn't hang it up inside 'cause it wouldn't keep so well where it was so warm.

"Next mornin' a piece of the meat was gone. Somebody had hooked it. There was a lot of them Frenchmen down around the lake after fish, but we knew 'twa'n't them. There was a regular beaten path between the two camps, so we could not track them fellows, though we knew they had stolen our meat.

"As luck would have it, on the very next mornin' I saw a fat moose down by the lake when I first came out. I 'spose 'twas t'other one's mate. So I clapped on my snow shoes agin, and grabbing the rifle, I started out, and soon drove the moose into deep snow and shot him—took him right through the heart. Now, ye see, we had meat enough—and good, too. But when we come to look up where the old meat was hung, may I be blessed if there wasn't another piece gone. Howsumever, we hung the rest up in the same place, for, to tell the plain truth, we'd just as lives them fellows should have some as not, seein' as how they hadn't got no gun. But yet we didn't hardly like this way of doing business, an' we meant to come some sort of game over 'em. That very day Bill went down to the settlement after letters.

"About noon Sam Hall come over, an' says he, looking up at our meat:

"'You've got a fine lot.'

"'Yes,' says I. 'But them 'tarnal Frenchmen come and steal it.'

"'Do they?' says Sam. But mind ye, I saw the blink of his eye, an' I knowed what it meant.

"'They do,' says I.

"'Then why don't you take it in?' says Sam.

"''Cause 'twont keep so well,' I told him.

"'It's too bad,' says he.

"'Never mind,' says I 'we've got enough left yet.'

"Sam waited till Bill got back from the settlement, and havin' got the letters and papers for his gang he went back. We might have kept a watch if we'd been a mind to, and so caught the thief, but we didn't want to. Howsumever, when we went out the next mornin' the finest piece of the lot was gone. It was the rump, and had a good piece of the sirloin with it. We'd rather they'd taken any other piece. Of course we know'd who the thief was, an' we know'd too, where the meat was. But we let the thing lay, and went about our work. We know'd that them fellers over in t'other camp would have part of the meat for breakfast, and then make a dinner of it.

"That noon we had dinner earlier than usual, and then Bill and me set off for the other camp. 'Twas a kind 'of warm day, and the door of Sam's camp was open, an' just as we got close to, we saw one of 'em catch up somethin' from the mess cloth and run and hide it. When we went in, part of 'em had done their dinner and was a smokin'. We was asked very perlitely to sit down, and after a while says I to Sam:

"'Sam, have ye seen any of them 'tarnal Frenchmen around here this forenoon?'

"'No,' says he. 'Why?'

"'Why nothing,' says I, 'only the pesky snipes stole some more of our meat last night.'

"'Did they?' says Sam, lookin' as honest as a deacon. But mind ye, I could see the evil in his eye.

"'They did,' says I. 'They stole the best piece we had. But 'twont do 'em much good I'm thinking.'

"'Why?' says Sam.

"'O—'cause 'twont.'

"'But why?' he asked agin, pooty earnestly.

"'O,' says I, 'You know Bill went down to the settlement yesterday?'

"'Yes—yes—yes,' said Sam, and the others said so, too, an' ye had ought to have seen 'em look at me.

"'Well,' says I, 'we had Bill get a lot of ratsbane—the regular arsenic. It's the most dreadful pizen in the world.'

"'And what did ye do with it?' Sam asked, beginnin' to look pale around the lips.

"Why,' says I, 'we thought most likely that if them cussed Frenchmen come agin they'd take the best piece we had, so I just took that rump piece, and got a little sharp stick, and then I punched in the pizen. I didn't care a snap. Thinks I to myself, if them thunderin' French thieves want meat, let 'em come and ask for it like men; but if they want to steal it, they shall have more than they think for. I jammed enough pizen into that piece of meat to kill forty men. Then I brushed it all off, so that there couldn't be any of it seen. Then, ye see, I hung it up handy, an' this mornin' that very piece was gone. Plague take 'em, it'll kill 'em just as sure as the world.'

"'O!' groaned Sam, clappin' both hands on his stomach. An' Pete Lombard, he jumped right up and give a yell. 'O, I'm dead!' he yelled.

"'Mercy!' cried Jim Bracket, turnin' pale as a ghost, an' makin' for the door.

"But I can't begin to tell ye how they acted. I never seed such a frightened set afore since I was born. There wasn't one of 'em but thought he was a gone sucker.

"'O, my poor wife!' groaned Sam Hall.

"'Cuss the meat!' cried Jack Hobbs.

"Pooty soon they was all out doors with their fingers down their throats, and such another spell of gaggin' an' heavin' you never did see. They groaned was a leetle ahead of all the groaning I ever heard afore.

"'Tim,' says Sam Hall, just like a cryin' baby, 'shall I die?'

"'But what's the matter?' says I.

"'O, that meat!' says he.

"'What meat?' says I.

"'That pizen'd meat!'

"'Did them Frenchmen stop here?' said I.

"'No,' Sam groaned. 'O! me an' Pete stole the meat. O, shall I die, Tim?'

"An' they all asked me if they should die.

"'I'm afeared you will,' says I; 'for we've all got to die sometime.'

"'But it's terrible to die away up here, where there aren't no friends to look at ye!' says Jack.

"'I'm sorry,' said I. 'I wish you'd taken some other piece.'

"'O, I wish we hadn't taken any!' cried Sam. 'I wish we'd let the cussed pizen'd stuff alone. O, my bowcels!'

"In a little while Bill and me turned to go; but Sam called us back.

"'O, don't go!' he cried. 'We shall all die! Stay here! Don't go!'

"'Better tell 'em the truth,' whispered Bill in my ear. ''Cause if you don't, some of 'em may die in earnest. I've heard of such things as folks dyin' just from imagination.'

"So I concluded to tell 'em all about it.

"'Sam,' says I, 'I guess you didn't get the pizen'd piece, after all. Bill says you didn't.'

"'Didn't we?' they all yelled at wonst.

"'No,' says I, 'for there wasn't any pizen'd meat at all. We never had any pizen. Only I'll tell you what we did do: *We'd marked that rump for our dinner to-day!*'

"As soon as I said this, me an' Bill started off; an' you may bet your life they didn't call us back that time. 'Twas a week afore any of them fellers come down to our camp, an' then they had to come and fetch letters. But not a word was said about the pizen'd meat. Howsumever, we didn't have any more stolen. But the next moose we killed, we sent 'em over a piece, and that kind of squared matters up. But I tell ye—it's a fact—I don't never want to see any men so frightened again as them fellers were when they thought they'd eaten PIZEN'D MEAT."

PRACTICAL FALSEHOODS.

Lies of action are blood relation to lies of speech, and oral lies constitute a small share of the falsehoods in the world. There are lies of custom and lies of fashion—lies of padding and lies of whalebone—lies of the first water in diamonds of paste, and unblushing blushes of lies to which a shower would give a different complexion; the politician's lies, who like a circus rider, strides two horses at once—the coquette's lies, who, like a professor of legerdemain, keeps six plates dancing at a time—lies sandwiched between bargains—lies of livery, behind republican coaches, in all the pomp of gold band and buttons—lies of red tape and sealing-wax—lies from the cannon's mouth—lies in the name of glorious principles that might make dead heroes clatter in their graves—Malakoffs of lies, standing upon sacred dust, and lifting their audacious pinnacles in the light of the eternal heaven.—*Chapin.*

GREAT DIAMOND OF RUSSIA.

In the first volume of the quarto edition of "P. S. Pallas's Travels through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire in the years 1793 and 1794," which was taken from a wreck on the coast of Cape Cod, we find a very full and interesting account of "The Moon of the Mountain," the celebrated diamond of Russian royalty. Pallas was Counsellor of State to the Czar Alexander, and during his stay at Astrakan became acquainted with the heirs of Grigori Safarov Shafrass, the Armenian who sold the precious gem to Russia. Shah Nadir had in his throne, with this diamond, another of equal splendor, called the "Sun of the Sea." At the time of his assassination the soldiers secured and secretly sold many of the richest ornaments belonging to the Persian Crown. Shafrass, also named Millionshik, or the Man of Millions, resided at Bassora. One day an Arganian Chief visited him, and secretly proposed to sell the diamond, with other precious stones. He was surprised at the low price demanded, and affirming that he had not money enough to buy the jewels, asked time to consult two brothers who were in business with him. The Armenian, with the approval of his brothers, went in pursuit of the vender. He wandered in vain in search of the treasure. Shafrass at length accidentally met the Arganian in Bagdad, and bought all the jewels in his possession for 50,000 piastres.

The gem of the first water, with a large emerald and ruby, was laid away in brilliant seclusion for twelve years. Then the Armenian, whose fears of losing the royal plunder were overcome by the love of money, set off with the jewels for a market. Passing through Iham and Constantinople, he directed his course across Hungary and Silesia to Amsterdam, where he made the first public display of the beautiful stones, and offered them for sale. It is said that the English Government was among the bidders. Russia sent for the "Moon of the Mountain," promising to pay the expenses of transmitting it if not purchased. The Russian Minister, Count Panin, through M. Laseref, the Court jeweller, made the following offer:—Shafrass was to have the patent of hereditary nobility, an annual pension of 6000 roubles, i. e., $4500, during life, and 500,000 roubles, or $375,000 in cash. The Armenian, feeling that "blessings *brighten* as they take their flight," became so extravagant in his demands that the negotiation was broken off and the diamond returned. Shafrass was now in trouble. His outlay had been great, and he had borrowed large amounts. He absconded, and went back to Astrakan. Afterward, Count Grigoricritsh Orlof renewed the Russian offer to purchase; and Shafrass accepted 450,000 roubles, or $337,500, ready money, together with the grant of Russian nobility. About one quarter of the sum was paid to the negotiators, and the rest, which at the death of the Armenian was the dower of his daughters, was squandered by the extravagance of their husbands. The diamond was secure, and shines on, though royal eyes which beheld its light with pride of power have lost their fire forever. Such is the story of the "Moon of the Mountain,"—the ornament of a sceptre which is shaken now in its sweep over the domain of the sultan. Who shall tell its history in the future?—*New York Sun.*

News Glances.

Mackerel Fisheries.—One third of the entire catch of Massachusetts mackerel in 1855 was inspected at Gloucester, viz: 73,000 bbls. In addition to this, the products of the Gloucester fisheries were 100,000 quintals of codfish, and 400 tons halibut, 650 bbls. fish oil. Upward of one million dollars were invested in this business, and three thousand men employed from that port.

Queer.—The following advertisement appeared lately in an English paper—it is genuine. "To Master Bakers.—A journeyman baker wishes to obtain work. The advertiser is pious, has a knowledge of the business, and is a member of the temperance society." Well, he deserves a good place.

Secrets of Health.—The four ordinary secrets of human life are—early rising, exercise, personal cleanliness, and the rising from table with the stomach unoppressed. There may be sorrows in spite of these, but they will be less with them, and nobody can be truly comfortable without them.

Thawing out Cows.—Some one in the neighborhood of Cleveland tells the Herald an almost incredible story in relation to the late cold weather. He says "it was so cold that the cows had to be driven into the house to thaw their bags before milking."

Munificent Donation.—The National Intelligencer publishes a letter from Mr. Latrobe, President of the American Colonization Society, announcing a proposal by Mr. John Stevens, of Talbot County, Md., to give to the society a ship costing from $35,000 to 36,000.

A little too much Rum.—A gentleman stepped into a distillery in Newburyport a day or two since, and accidentally fell some eight or nine feet into one of the vats, where he had to remain till his cries brought help. He escaped without material injury.

The Markets.—Flour has "riz" as so many persons *knead* it—some purchasers *bolting*, however: Indigo looks rather blue—pickles are as sharp as ever—tar sticks to first hands, and tobacco is much puffed by some, though others sneeze at it.

Recipe for a Popular Lecture.—The following is Dr. Elder's recipe for a popular lecture: Take one drop of thought, beat it up to a bushel of bubble, and throw rainbows upon it for one hour.

A valuable Pew.—A pew in the centre aisle of Rev. Dr. Putnam's church, Roxbury, was sold a few days since for $900 and taxes, in all nearly $1000.

A Bank Check.—Soon after the battle of Leipsic, a wit observed, "that Napoleon must be in funds, for he had received a *check on the bank of the Elbe.*"

Mathematical.—Mr. Sheutz of Stockholm, has invented a calculating machine which solves the knottiest problems.

Too true.—A man ceases to be a "good fellow" when he wont do what every body wants him to do.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION.

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

☞ Terms of the FLAG OF OUR UNION, $2,00 per annum, invariably in advance, being discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. See imprint on last page.

☞ All persons who are subscribers to THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, whether in club or otherwise, who will enclose us $2, stating that they are on the subscription list of the Flag, shall receive BALLOU'S PICTORIAL for one year, commencing with the same date their Flag subscription commences.

KINGS AND PLAYERS.

When the Yankees settle in any place they establish newspapers; the advent of the British is signalized by the laying out of race-courses; and the French, passionately attached to the theatre, carry their players with them. In the Crimea, the British got up races and steeple-chases; while the French Zouaves erected a little theatre and played vaudevilles for the amusement of their comrades. When Napoleon the First began to aspire to the part of Cæsar, and saw his future glory dawning on his mortal vision, he said one day to his friend Talma, the great French tragedian, "You shall one day play before a whole pit full of kings." At Erfurt, on the 28th of September, 1811, "Cinna" was actually played before the Emperor Napoleon, the Emperor Alexander, and the king of Saxony. "Britannicus" was represented on the following day. The assembly was increased by Prince William of Prussia, Duke William of Bavaria, and Prince Leopold of Coburg, who married the Princess Charlotte of England. On the evening of the 2d of October, Napoleon received Goethe, and "Mithridates" was played. On the third day came "Philoctetes," when, on the occurrence of the line,

"A great man's friendship is the gift of gods,"

Alexander offered Napoleon his hand. In the second act the king of Wurtemberg made his appearance and took his seat. On the 4th, the king and queen of Westphalia were added to the royal company, and finally the king of Bavaria and the Prince Primate. After the close of the sixth night's performance, Napoleon said to the leading actor: "Talma, my friend, I have redeemed at Erfurt the promise I made at Paris—you have played to a pit full of kings."

Talma was Napoleon's friend at the most discouraging period of his life, and the great emperor never forgot his obligation to the great actor. The emperor was passionately fond of the tragic stage, and loved to declaim passages from his favorite dramatic authors. He took a French company with him to Moscow when he invaded Russia. After the retreat, the troup passed three months in Stockholm, and Mlle. George, now a wrinkled, poverty-stricken old woman, then a brilliant beauty and actress, undertook to convey a letter from Bernadotte to Jerome Napoleon, king of Westphalia. She had with her also a casket, containing a hundred thousand dollars' worth of diamonds. She travelled in a carriage, and rode night and day. Suddenly one midnight, with loud hurrahs, a cloud of Cossacks surrounded the carriage. The door was opened, and a young Russian officer presented himself. Mlle. George appealed to his gallantry, and the horde of enemies became a friendly escort, which did not desert the ambassadress until she had reached the next station. She faithfully accomplished her mission.

The late Czar Nicholas was a great patron of French actors and actresses, and particularly the distinguished Mlle. Rachel, the greatest of them all. If peace is declared between France and Russia, the players of Paris will have cause to bless the event; for St. Petersburg is a great mart for their talents The French stage will flourish as long as the French nation exists.

MARCH OF INTELLECT.—We have often heard of the diffusion of knowledge, and quite as often see that it is spread rather thinly. A person who had recently returned from the Cape of Good Hope in one of Seccomb and Taylor's ships, was speaking in company of the well-known fondness of the lion for the flesh of a Hottentot. "A hot what?" asked a lady. "A Hottentot, madam," replied the traveller. "Why, bless me," rejoined the lady, "do they *cook* their victuals there?"

THE "LIGHT GUITAR."—This used to be a very popular song, though it has been shelved long ago. We remember on one occasion, when Mrs. Austin was vocalizing at the Tremont, the property man's boy went into Parker's to borrow a guitar, and the proprietor handed him a black one. "That wont do, mister," said the boy, "for Mrs. Austin's got to sing the *light* guitar."

ABSURDITIES.—To ask the painter of your portrait if it is a likeness—to go out shooting with a Frenchman and feel astonished at receiving a charge in the small of your back—and to go to law for five dollars, when you can avoid it by paying ten.

A RECOMMENDATION.—On the English translation of the card of a French inn, between Boulogne and Abbeville, these words are printed: "The wines are of that quality they will leave you nothing to hope for."

ATROCIOUS.—It was the New Orleans Picayune that said an old maid eyes a single gentleman with the same feelings that we look at a street dog in dogdays, as if to say "wonder if he intends to bite?"

REMARKABLE.—An exchange paper, in giving an account of a sentence of death passed upon a criminal, remarks, "he appeared to feel unpleasantly." We should rather think he did.

A GREAT SINGER.—Madame Alboni weighs 280 pounds. Why don't she change her name? *All-bony* hardly comports with so much obesity.

EDITORS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

While, in this country, the editorial profession is duly honored, and it is quite a feather in a man's cap to be known as belonging to the "press-gang," in England it would appear that the profession is not held in very high repute. It is not a passport to office. One might as well have the bar-sinister in his shield, as to confess that he wields the pen and scissors. It is perhaps in consequence of this condition of things that the names of the editors of English papers are generally suppressed. The editor is almost invariably an impersonality. Anonymous editorship has its advantages and disadvantages. Where the writer is known, a personal prejudice frequently prevents his articles from exercising a due influence. His opinions, in themselves, may be perfectly sound, his arguments perfectly logical; but if he has formerly entertained different views, they lose their force, and his articles are not judged by themselves, but by their author. An editor writes more freely and easily when he writes anonymously. But then he is apt to be betrayed into more bitterness, more ferocity, perhaps, than if he were personally responsible for his utterances.

Mr. Galliardet once remarked of the American press: "There was a time, perhaps, when the prejudices of the old British aristocracy had extended over the young republic, its revolted daughter; there was a time, perhaps, when the American press was ranked in the number of the secondary conditions of social life, when its writers were only penny-a-liners, a kind of unworthy and mercenary laborers in the field of thought. But these times have already nearly disappeared, and will soon disappear entirely. The press, too, has had its revolution of '75 in America, and has by degrees obtained esteem and influence by its talent and dignity."

In France, from the revolution of 1830 to that of 1848, the press was acknowledged to be a power in the realm; editorial talent was a universal passport to society, to court favor, to senatorial honors and to fortune. But Louis Napoleon has crushed the press; all the editors of France are now but the servile echoes of the views of one man. Editorial independence is visited with fine, imprisonment, and the ruin of the journal which dares utter any truths unpalatable to the sovereign. Thus, with all the wit, learning and eloquence of the Frenchmen, the French papers are excessively vapid and stupid. The sense of degradation deadens even essays on art, literature and science, which are the only topics free for discussion, so universally petrifying to all intellectual effort is political despotism. Give us a free press or none at all.

MILLS'S STATUE OF JACKSON.

At the recent inauguration of the equestrian statue of Jackson, at New Orleans, Clark Mills, the sculptor, made the following remarks with regard to his work: "General Jackson is here represented as he appeared on the morning of the 8th of January, forty-one years ago. He has advanced to the centre of the line in the act of review: the lines have come to present arms as a salute to their commander, who is acknowledging it by raising his chapeau, according to the military etiquette of that day. His restive horse, anticipating the next move, attempts to dash down the line; the bridle hand of the dauntless hero being turned under, shows that he is restraining the horse, whose open mouth and curved neck indicate that the animal is feeling the bit. I have thought this explanation necessary, as there are many critics who profess not to understand the conception of the artist."

FAST HORSES.—There are a good many fast ones on the road just now; but the fastest of the flyers couldn't lead the Dutchman's horse that Hackett used to tell of: "Dere's de horse, vrow. He'll travel de hill up, and te road down, petter as any oder horse never did. 'Oder day I vas riding been, and haf come to Rip Van Winkle's house up; my vatch vos youst four on te clock; ven I comes to Hans Von Wagglance's it vas vaunting two minutes to four. Ach! himmel! he beat de time dat mooch."

A SLIGHT RISE.—Most of our readers remember the charming Mrs. Wood, the vocalist, and her triumphs at the Tremont Theatre, in Boston, and at the Park, New York. At the Tremont she was rehearsing the song from the Beggars' Opera, "A miser thus a shilling sees," when she told the leader she should like to sing it a *note higher*. "Then, madam," said Finn, who was on the stage, you must say, 'a miser thus a *guinea* sees.'"

TOUCHING.—"Swate jewel," said Pat to his vixen of a wife, "and its meself that hopes to live to see the day when you're a disconsolate widow waping over the could sod that covers my remains; then, be St. Patrick, I'll see how ye'll get along widout me, honey dear."

ADVERTISEMENTS.—Advertisers are proverbial for playing the dickens with the King's English. Very recently some of these inveterates announced for sale a "mahogany child's chair," a "great man's coat," and an "elegant lady's shawl."

WASHINGTON.—The citizens of New Orleans propose erecting a statue to the Father of his country in one of their public places. It will form an appropriate pendant to Mills's noble statue of Jackson.

LEAP YEAR.—Sir John Cullier, the famous miser, used to return thanks that he had been born on the 29th of February, because then he only kept his birthday every fourth year.

THE DIFFERENCE.—Paris has only one church to about 23,900 inhabitants, while Brooklyn, New York, has one to every 1000. Brooklyn deserves to be called the "City of Churches."

GOOD.—The citizens of Spuyten Duyvel, New York, have concluded not to give up the old Dutch appellation of their ancient town.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

Laura Keene's "Varieties" continues one of the most popular places in New York.

A young lady of Philadelphia has been reciting Hiawatha dressed as an Indian.

In the year 1855, 915 patients were admitted into the Massachusetts General Hospital.

Neither Cayuga nor Seneca Lake were frozen over during the past winter.

The total population of Louisiana is 575,922, of which 299,626 are whites.

Cats are said to be musical, because their interior consists of fiddle-strings.

Mr. Edward M. Skidmore, a New York reporter, is police clerk, at $1250 per annum.

John Waters, of Vinegar Hill, Illinois, was lately fined $20 for kissing a lady.

A Mr. Whitney, of New York, takes very fine photographs on isinglass.

The Irving House, New York, will soon be occupied for stores and warerooms.

The Free Love Societies of New York have all suspended and dissolved.

A lady in Maysville has lately eaten three hundred dollars' worth of opium—costly living.

There is not more than half a crop of sugar in Cuba. That's short and sweet.

Dr. Scoresby is going to Australia to experiment on the variation of the compass.

A man who gives lessons on the French horn is called a toot-er (tutor).

There is a movement on foot to establish a new navy yard at Brunswick, Ga.

The ages of eighteen clergymen in this State range from seventy-three to ninety-three years.

The officers and crews of the Kane Arctic Expedition have received presents from England.

The railroad system of Illinois has doubled its population in five years.

Since 1852, twelve steamships have been lost at sea, and 1250 persons perished.

The governor-general of Canada says the reciprocity system works well.

The Delawares believe their guardian spirit to be a great eagle—not a golden eagle though.

The "way to make butter come" is to pay for it and have it sent by railroad.

A monster snow plough, thirty feet long, and costing $2000, has been built at Chicago.

The Texas debt bill is discharged by our government paying $7,750,000.

BALL THE ARTIST.

A notice we saw the other day of this excellent man and artist, who is now hard at work in his studio at Florence, Italy, recalled to our mind an adventure of his, which occurred when Kimball occupied our present publication hall with his museum. Ball had a room in the building, and sometimes volunteered to lock up the outer door, after all the performances had been concluded, and carry home the key to Mr. Kimball. Late one night he was wending his way to the South-End, with the huge brass door key firmly clenched in his right hand beneath his cloak. Somewhere near the Boylston Market he saw a gentleman approaching, whom he mistook for the "enterprising proprietor." Jumping at the opportunity of getting rid of his cumbrous charge, he extended the formidable instrument. To his surprise, the stranger halted, as if he had been shot, and exclaimed: "For God's sake, spare my life! I'm a married man, with a family! Here's my money, but spare my life, good Mr. Highwayman!" And the stranger, dashing a wallet at his feet, turned and fled precipitately. Our hero, one of the gentlest men in the world, horror-struck at being mistaken for a robber, and having not the slightest ambition to figure as a Paul Clifford in the eyes of the midnight guardians of the city's peace and honor, turned and fled in an opposite direction, and gaining his lodgings at a "two-forty lick," locked himself into the room, and passed a wretched night. The next day he walked the city like a spectre, fearing to meet at every corner a hand-bill, headed "Highway Robbery," and offering a reward for the detection of the criminal. But nothing came of it, and thereafter he never presented a brass-barrelled door key to a stranger.

FINE WRITING.—A mania for what is called fine writing is one of the besetting sins of the day. Our friend Scrimmins, editor of the "Dark Blue Eagle," perpetrates the following in one of his political leaders: "With fearless footsteps we'll tread the billows beneath the sky of wrath, our halyards tipped with fire, carrying with us a tongue of thunder; and none shall conquer till the last armed man has deserted, or fallen in the conflict." Rather mixed up, Scrimmins.

THE EATING-HOUSE WAITER.—Did you ever ask a waiter, when the bill of fare was new laid, what he'd got? His answer might be repeated as follows: "Haunchavenison, breastervealan-oysters, very nice; curry fowl, rosegoose, leggerlamb an' sparrowhawks;" or, at least, it sounds like that.

DON'T BELIEVE IT.—A Dutch astronomer predicts that the earth will be used up by a *comet* in twenty-two millions of years. He can't *comet* over us with that story. However, out of respect to his learning, it will be no more than justice to wait and see if it will be so.

SHINING.—Count d'Orsay speaking to Rogers one day of Lady Blessington, said: "Sir, she is a meteoric light among the female aristocracy." "Say, rather, a *blue* light," said Rogers, very quietly.

THE ANGEL OF THE CRIMEA.—Florence Nightingale was born at Florence, Italy, in 1823. Hence the sweet name she bears is commemorative of her birthplace.

OYSTERS.—Three millions of dollars are annually expended on Virginia oysters. There was a short supply last winter, and they sold in Boston for three dollars a gallon.

THE ICE.—The breaking up of the ice in the western waters would have been well enough if it hadn't broke up many of the steamboats, too.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"The Stone House," a tale by EMERET H. SEDGE.
"The Music of the Stars," verses by H. T. SPERRY.
"The Night Attack," a story by HORACE B. STANIFORD.
"The Eternal Flower," lines by H. GURDON BABCOCK.
"No Cross—no Crown," a beautiful sketch by the late lamented MRS. CAROLINE LEE HENTZ.
"To Callie," verses by WYANDOTTE.
"The Unfortunate Weakness," a story by EMILY R. PAGE.
"To a Pair of Eyes," a poem.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We give a fine portrait of that eminent orator, statesman and scholar, Hon Edward Everett.

Views, exterior and interior of the celebrated Shot Tower, in Baltimore, exhibiting the process of manufacturing and perfecting shot.

A large and artistic engraving, covering two whole pages, giving a Bird's Eye View of the City of Boston.

Portrait of Sir Allan Napier McNabb, recent Prime Minister of Canada.

View of Hudson River Institute, at Claverack, New York.

Exterior of an Eastern Coffee House and Bazaar.

Also, the Interior of a Turkish House.

*** The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ One copy of THE FLAG, and one copy of the PICTORIAL, when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

The British forces now in the Crimea number about 58,000 men.

Mr. Du Pre died in the Queen's Bench prison, London, on the 6th ult., after an incarceration of forty-five years for debt.

Rev. Rowland Williams has been dismissed by the Bishop of Llandaff from his office of chaplain, for publishing a work on rational godliness.

Jullien is having a musical crystal palace built for him in Surrey gardens—in which he is to give monster concerts.

A blind man in Devonshire, England, has actually been a serveyor and planner of roads; his ear guiding him as to distance as accurately as the eye to others.

Roger, "the greatest tenor in the world," has been performing his original character, "Jean of Leyden," in the *Prophet*, with Tedesco in the role of Fides, at *L'Academie* in Paris.

In the course of the last two or three years, the periodical press of the East has greatly increased in importance. As many as twelve journals and four reviews are now published at Constantinople.

Princess Augusta Bonaparte, daughter of Prince Charles Bonaparte was lately married to her cousin, Prince Gabrielli, at the Chapel of the Tuilleries, in Paris. The Emperor and Empress were present.

The British Government has instituted a new order of merit, styled the "Victoria cross," and is to be given only to members of the Army or Navy who distinguish themselves by individual acts of bravery in the face of an enemy.

The banking institution of London shows larger profits than our own. The London and Westminster Bank (the leading joint stock institution) has recently declared a dividend equivalent to 16 per cent. per annum, viz: 5 per cent. regular dividend and bonus of 5 per cent. for the past year.

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Minds of moderate calibre ordinarily condemn everything which is beyond their range.

The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout.

Nothing so much prevents our being natural as the desire of appearing so.

We live in the hearts of others when we open our own.

Learn to *hold thy tongue*. Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks silence.

We should have reason to be ashamed of our most brilliant actions, if the world could see the motives from which they spring.

We do not always like people the better, for paying us all the court which we ourselves think our due.

There are some persons on whom their faults sit well, and others who are made ungraceful by their good qualities.

Marriage is the best state for a man in general; and every man is a worse man in proportion as he is unfit for the marriage state.

Ten poor men can sleep tranquilly upon a mat; but two kings are not able to live at peace in a quarter of the world.

Vanity is the poison of agreeableness; yet as poison, when artfully and properly applied, has a salutary effect in medicine, so has vanity in the commerce and society of the world.

He who is passionate and hasty, is generally honest. It is your cool, dissembling hypocrite, of whom you should beware. "There is no deception in a bulldog." It is only the cur that snakes up and bites you when your back is turned.

Always suspect a man who affects great softness of manner, an unruffled evenness of temper, and an enunciation studied, slow, and deliberate. These things are all unpatural, and bespeak a degree of mental discipline to which he that has no purpose of craft or design to answer, cannot submit to drill himself.

Joker's Budget.

Quack doctors are considered "drivers" of the "last stage" of disease.

A man frequently admits that he was wrong, but a woman, never—she was "only mistaken."

When is a nutmeg like a prison window? Ans.—When it is grated.

"Mother," said a little boy, "I'm tired of this pug nose; it's growing pugger and pugger every day."

Carrying coals from the grocery in a carpet bag, may be very genteel, but it is bad for the lining.

Sir Isaac Newton was never married. Guss he thought more of Saturn's ring than he did of Hymen's.

"Mr. Smith, be particular to have my coat well wadded." "Never mind," said Smith, "wadded or not, it will stand a charge."

One of the Irish newspapers contains an advertisement announcing as lost, a cloth cloak, belonging to a gentleman lined with blue.

The unfortunate wretch who wrote the tail of a comet, has obtained employment in copying the example of a sum in arithmetic.

An exchange paper says, "Hicks is engaged on a head of Longfellow." Is "Hicks" a barber or a sculptor?

An editor out West says: "If we have offended any man in the short but brilliant course of our career, let him send us in a new hat, and say nothing about it." Very cool.

It has been observed that frequenters of concerts who are in the habit of beating time with their feet and kicking up a dust, are presumed to be ignorant of the repeal of the "stamp act."

A distinguished literary tourist was once found in a paroxysm of tears over the supposed tomb of Washington, at Mount Vernon, but it turned out to be only the ice house!

Quill and Scissors.

The marriage ceremony was recently performed in Broome county in a very singular manner. A "fast" young man, having a lady with him, drove up to the residence of a magistrate, and requested him to accompany them to Kirkwood. They then drove to the hotel, when the "squire" got out and performed the ceremony—the bride and bridegroom sitting in the sleigh the while—and then drove off.

The United States' Land Commission has confirmed the claims of the Catholic Church to the Mission church buildings in the twenty-one old missions in California. Since then, the claims made by Bishop Allemany, for one league of land in each mission, on behalf of the Christian Indians, has been rejected.

The almanacs say that Saturn's rings will be visible all of this year, with the aid of a telescope, their southern surface being now turned towards the earth. This planet will be an evening star until June 24, then morning star until December 31, then evening star until July 10, 1857.

Mr. R. G. Parder, in his revised "Manual of the Strawberry," says that during the last year New York city consumed from 47,000 to 54,000 bushels of this delicious fruit; Philadelphia, from 10,000 to 14,000; Boston, from 9000 to 11,000; and Cincinnati from 11,000 to 14,000.

Owing to the munificent offer of $36,000 by a gentleman of Maryland, to purchase a ship for the use of the American Colonization Society, the committee having in charge the business of building a ship by gentlemen of Maine, have suspended operations for the present.

A bill has passed the Senate of Virginia, appropriating $1000 a year, for five years, to enable the State Historical Society to procure from England manuscript copies of documents and letters relative to the early history of the Old Dominion.

It is a singular fact that while in the United States the birthday of Robert Burns has been observed for many years, in London the first dinner ever given on the return of the day was recently celebrated.

A bill to restore the death penalty is now pending in the Wisconsin Legislature, and "there is danger," a correspondent of the Chicago Tribune says, "that the effort for restoration will be successful."

It is stated in "Howell's Familiar Letters" that a ship was built in England, in 1635, 127 feet long, and 46 feet 6 inches in breadth, and was called the "Sovereign of the Seas."

The most important item of information to be found in Miss Murray's book, is the fact that chowder is a "praiseworthy preparation, enabling you to eat soup and fish at one time."

The best teas, it is said, never find their way out of China. The finest quality of black tea is the scented *Liang-sing*, and is worth in China $2 50 per pound.

J. G. Percival, by many regarded as the first of American poets, is now State Geologist in Wisconsin, where the settlers call him "old rock smasher."

R. R. Coxe, a planter in good circumstances, residing in Marshall county, Tenn., recently killed his wife in a fit of insanity, and afterwards killed himself.

Green peas were hardly known in 1550, though the Romans had a dish which was very much sought after, composed of boiled or fried gray peas.

According to the American Baptist Almanac for the current year, there are in the United States 6475 ordained Baptist ministers.

The Leipsic Missionary Society are building a missionary house for the training of young men, who are to labor among the heathen.

When a man leaves his place of business, he should leave the cares and annoyances of the traffic with his goods.

Miss Bremer has written a new story, and the sheets are already in the hands of Mary Howitt for translation.

Yankee Sullivan is basking in the sunshine of royalty at the Sandwich Islands. He is the king's principal body-guard.

Great Britain has 461 ships in her navy, carrying 15,243 guns, and the United States, 74 ships, with 2026 guns.

A "capital good fellow" is a fellow whose capital is at the service of every idle loafer.

Mr. Warren, the author of "Ten Thousand a Year," is now a member of Parliament.

Gen. Prince Paskiewitch died at Warsaw on the 1st of February.

The total population of Alabama is 836,192.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Dr. Blagden, Mr George C. Breck, of Wentworth, N. H., to Miss Sarah C. Wesson.
By Rev. Dr. Neale, Mr. John Wiley to Miss Amanda Woodman.
By Rev. Mr. Blalkie, Mr. Henry A. Lyford to Miss Annie I. Miller.
By Rev Mr. Skinner, Mr. Ethan A. Wentworth to Miss Ellen J. De Wolf.
By Rev. Mr. Winkley, Mr. Samuel Hall to Miss Sarah R. French.
By Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. David B. Horne to Miss Julia B. Pitman.
At Charlestown, by Rev. Mr. Hutchins, Mr. George H. Conant to Miss Caroline L. Edwards.
At Cambridge, by Rev. Mr. Spalding, Mr. Robert Burton to Mrs. Ellen Patterson.
At Quincy, by Rev. Mr. Clark, Mr. George A. Bent to Miss Susan W. Prouty.
At Beverly, Mr. Richard Burnham, of Danvers, to Miss Adaline Jackson.
At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Carlton, Mr. Thomas Hinsmans to Miss Maria Beecher.
At Marblehead, by Rev. Mr. Huntoon, Mr. Thomas Clothey to Miss Adeline Brown.
At Plymouth, by Rev. Mr. Johnson, Mr. Ezra S. Dinman to Miss Joanna Churchill.
At Lowell, by Rev. Mr. Howe, Mr. John Sheldon to Miss Caroline White.
At Newburyport, by Rev. Dr. Dimmick, Mr. Daniel T. Letterney, of Boston, to Mrs. Sarah McQuillen.
At Dunstable, by Rev. Mr. Adams, Mr. E. Pebbles, of Natick, to Miss May J. M. Cummings.
At Gilmanton, N. H., Henry Rockwood, M. D., of Halifax, Vt., to Miss Laura A. Clifford.

Deaths.

In this city, Mr. Samuel Bartlett, 59; Mrs. Margaret Ann Choate Frye, 36; Mr. Zenas Sawyer, 47; Widow Lydia Richardson, 82; Mrs. Elizabeth C. Ball, 42; Widow Hannah Andrews, of Hingham, 79; Mrs. Abigail Pitman, 80; Mrs. Ann Bourguin, 70; Esias Preble, Esq., 79.
At Charlestown, Widow Sarah Brown, 82; Mrs. Mary L. Williams, 31.
At Chelsea, Mrs. Bridget Barry, 45; Mr. Jacob Hodge, 65.
At Dorchester, Mr. John Preston, 69; Miss Mary Ann Baxter, 61.
At Roxbury, Mr. Andrew Newman, 50.
At Cambridgeport, Mrs. Mary C. Howes, 70; Mrs. Octris S. Cornell, 44.
At West Newton, Mr. Samuel A. Pearson, 28.
At Braintree, Mr. Edmund S. Arnold, 23.
At Lynn, Mr. William Wiggin, 92.
At Salem, Mrs. Betsey Patten Story, 80; Mr. Gregor Mcdonald, 26; Miss Mary Louise Stimpson, 21.
At Watertown, Mrs. Ann, widow of the late Dr. Theodore Dexter.
At West Wareham, Capt. Nathaniel Hamblin, 64.
At North Bridgewater, Mr. William Alden, 83.
At Newburyport, Capt. Oliver O. Jones, 47; Mr. David Preston, of Lynnfield, 78.
At Worcester, Mrs. Miriam Newton, 76.
At Ludlow, Widow Abigail Putnam, 90.
At Kingston, Mr. Robert Cushman, 67.
At Fitchburg, Dr. O. L. H. Hantley; Mr. William Furlong, 60.
At Westhampton, Widow Rhoda Morgan, 90.
At Guilford, Conn., Mrs. Ruth, wife of Rev. David Baldwin, 80.
At Belfast, Mr. Justus G. Miller, 31.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MUSINS.

BY U. D. TREAD.

I was musing—musing lone,
At my window yester-night
While my candle, burning dim,
Shed around a fitful light;
While the wind without was moaning—
Moaning through the naked tree,
I was musing on the future,
And its dread uncertainties.

Darkness o'er my spirit brooded,
Like the darkness of a room,
Where the dying embers only
Give distinctness to the gloom;
Wearily the moments glided,
Wearily, with sadness fraught;
Clad in sable robes of mourning,
Seemed each melancholy thought.

Then the future to my vision
Seemed its mysteries to unclose;
I beheld life's dreary pathway
Thickly set with lurking foes;
Friendship seemed unreal and fleeting,
Love inconstant and untrue—
And the stars that hope had lighted,
One by one in clouds withdrew.

Then I prayed in deepest anguish,
That the cup might pass from me,
That those days of darker sorrow
I might never live to see;
And, the while, a change came o'er me,
Like a wave from Lethe's tide,
A most sweet and soothing calmness
O'er my spirit seemed to glide.

Then a something spoke within me,
That did more than mortal seem;
Whispering softly—whispering sweetly,
Like an angel in a dream:
"Fear not thou to trust the future!
Wheresoe'er thy lot may fall:
God is with thee and above thee;
He directs and governs all."

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

PRIDE.

BY HARRY ASHTON.

Ralph Atherton commenced life without a shilling. Strong, vigorous and energetic, he rose from the poor and friendless pauper to the rich and influential citizen. True, it was a hard and thankless beginning; but Ralph bent his determined eye upon a star, and lived but for the future, the bright, the glorious future. For twenty long and dreary years in the little counting-room of the "Lelands," from whence nought was discernible save the gabled-end roof and faded sign-board, which announced them to be brokers, had he toiled, mused, speculated and grown rich.

In the memorable crisis of 1816, the house of the Lelands suspended payment. An event so unfortunate and ruinous to them, resulted to the advantage of Ralph. Having means at his disposal, he effected a safe and secret arrangement, by which he became their successor. With firm heart and renewed energy, he prepared to meet the obstacles before him, and upon the ruin of the Lelands, Ralph Atherton began to found himself a fortune. Years rolled swiftly on, and left him plodding the rough course of life, intent upon the achievement of one great purpose—the acquisition of money.

When Esther Leland married Ralph Atherton the world was astonished. Esther was then just twenty, young, handsome and agreeable. She seemed the last being who would fancy a man like Atherton. Proud, weak and wayward, she had dreamed those dreams of married life the cold and calculating broker was fitted to dispel. Still he was rich; ambition prompted her to the union; she married him for money. And when the world proclaimed him to be a man of gold, pride, that arrogant pride which is ever the nursling of poverty, was gratified, and she flattered herself she was happy.

But in those long and dreary days that went and came so often, her mind would wander back to early life, when she was young, and artless, and a child. 'Twas then the wife repented of her crime, and wished that time could bear her back to days when she was Esther Leland. The past was past, and might not be recalled; the future was before her—she might repent at leisure. This world is given to marriages for gold. It was this incentive that bound these two opposite natures together. Time passed swiftly on, and Esther Atherton existed among the things that were. The head of Ralph Atherton was silvered over with age. He had surmounted the aspirings of ambition, for his coffers were heavy with money; but besides the yellow earth so carefully huddled together, nothing remained to cherish his declining years, save a daughter. There exists in the breast of every man some image to teach him he is human!

In the oppressive summer of 1830, when that cosmopolite, the Asiatic cholera, swept its direful wing over the good city of Charleston, among the many who sought the cooling breezes of the north, were Ralph Atherton and his daughter. It was June, that delightful month, when nature, bursting through its chilling bonds, stands forth in its surprising perfection, robing the glad earth with beauty, that the Athertons, journeying up the Potomac, tarried at Harper's Ferry. Here, invigorated by the pure mountain air, and also charmed by the picturesque appearance of the country, they determined to remain. At an old homestead, far from the noisy and remorseless world, he and his daughter found a home amid the deep solitude of nature.

Caleb Anderson, the farmer, by whom Ralph and his daughter were welcomed, had one great weakness; he was passionately fond of his son Charlie. It was in vain the good neighbors of Caleb assured him that Charlie would be spoiled reading those "romances," and imbibing those "high notions," which were to result in the speedy and certain ruin of the aforesaid Charles. But Caleb would argue that novels weren't such a bad thing after all; for Charlie had told him they were nothing but truths dressed up fantastic-like, and then whipped into ship-shape. Then would the good Caleb become slightly ruffled, and say: "If they didn't b'lieve him they might tackle Charlie, and he'd soon show 'em. 'Cause why, he understood the nature of the animal, and had one of the awfullest powers of argument that he had ever experienced."

Having thus logically defined his principles, Caleb would gradually relapse into good humor, and Charlie go on reading to his heart's content. At last the announcement that some verses had been found with the name of Charles Anderson upon them, ran like wildfire through the village, and a committee of condolence was immediately despatched to the dwelling of the worthy Caleb. By their persuasions, the old gentleman was induced to appoint Ralph to give his son Charlie a lecture. The old gentleman's endeavors were attended with complete success, for he not only ascertained he had written the verses, but much to his astonishment, Charlie gravely informed him, "that the fount from whence he drew the inspiration, was Lucy Atherton." Poets have drawn inspirations from sources less sparkling than Charlie's!

Beautiful Lucy Atherton inherited with the haughty and determined spirit of her father, the pride and waywardness of her mother. It is said the sins of the parent are visited upon the child; so pride, the master spirit of the mother, reigned in the heart of the daughter; not that feeling which, springing from the heart, emulates its possessor, but the selfish, inordinate pride of wealth.

When Charlie Anderson first saw her, she had passed her fifteenth birthday, and was fast ripening into womanhood. Dark curling ringlets shaded a forehead fair as alabaster; eyes, large and lustrous, conveyed with unerring precision the emotions of her mind, while her small and regular features were lighted with an expression warm and pleasing. A natural impulse drew them together. Ardent admirers of nature, and roving amid its poetical delights, they contracted a friendship dangerous and enduring. They roamed together in the fragrant fields; they wandered through the dark and shady groves, culling the flowers, and listening to the thousand voices that gladdened its wildness.

There was one spot, situated far in the heart of the greenwood, where the searching rays of the summer sun were unable to penetrate, and where nought but the chirrup of the busy squirrel, or the eager leap of the speckled trout from the stream that rippled by, disturbed the tranquillity of its shadows. It was here, during the warm and sultry days of summer, that Charles Anderson loved to linger. It was here, charmed by the romance of Waverly, borne to her ear by the musical voice of her companion, that Lucy Atherton nearly forgot she was the daughter of a millionaire.

About three miles below the homestead of the Andersons, there was said to exist a spot more beautiful than the wildest creations of the poet. Charlie described it so glowingly, they all determined to visit the wonderful locality, where, to adopt his poetical expression, "the earliest rays of the summer sun emblazoned it with beauty, and parting day lingered to play in its grottoes; where none but the lover of nature should be permitted to repair, and where a worldly and manœuvering individual like Ralph Atherton would feel rather out of his element."

One fine morning the family carriage stood at the door of the homestead. Ralph, the worthy Caleb and his helpmate, ensconced themselves therein, while Charlie and Lucy, mounted on horseback, impatiently listened to the admonitions "to ride slow and carefully;" and with merry hearts the party commenced their excursion to the valley.

Reader, did you ever experience a picnic that didn't end with a drenching? No matter how bright or favorable the morning, how clear the atmosphere, or unclouded the sky, let but a party start picnic-ing, and the floodgates of heaven are unloosed. It shall be recorded, however, for the wonder of succeeding generations, and as a curious fact in the natural history of picnics, that not one drop of rain descended to mar the pleasure or dampen the ardor of the company. On the contrary, it seemed as though nature had donned its sweetest smile to convince Ralph Atherton that something in this world besides dollars and cents exists to ennoble humanity. And if there ever was a spot which the revolution of ages had failed to deform, if the all-wise Creator had left some little mark by which to remind us of the beauties of Eden, here was its favored situation.

Upon a gentle slope, under the canopy of a spreading beech, the viands were carefully prepared by the wife of the worthy Caleb, while Lucy and her companion strolled through the valley, admiring its grandeur, bold and picturesque. Never before had Ralph Atherton experienced an influence so genial, so ecstatic. The spirit of younger days thrilled through him; and he wondered why he had passed his youthful years in the counting-room of the Lelands.

"No wonder," he murmured, "young Anderson is poetical. No wonder he discards the rusty town, and leaves untrod the rugged way to wealth; that his spirit, wild and free as the eagle, fails to be fascinated by the glitter of the world; that by living among such scenes as these, he has imbibed their bold and untamed characteristics. As for me, I have toiled long and untiringly. I have secured myself a fortune few mortals have surpassed. I have surmounted the projects of ambition, and need the rest and retirement occasioned by an arduous and active life. I will purchase this lovely retreat, and enhance its beauty by the adornments of art. Here will I build myself a resting-place worthy of its location, and spend the balance of my days amid the grateful quietude of nature."

Reader, many persons like Ralph Atherton believe gold to be the acme of human happiness—many persons like Ralph Atherton are much mistaken.

The announcement of dinner concluded Ralph Atherton's reverie, and with sharpened appetites the party prepared to discuss the good things provided. All noticed that the broker wore an unusually contented and cheerful expression. Even the roguish Charlie stopped short to inquire "who had been firing sunbeams at Mr. Atherton?"

"Come, come, my young friend," said the broker, "none of your witticisms; for like the sunbeams, they are light and obtrusive. And there is another reason, since you have chosen to break a lance, why your wit is like a sunbeam—it is very easily overshadowed."

"There is a capital reason for that, too," retorted Charlie. "Such wit as yours is heavy enough to overshadow anything; and as you are evidently sun-struck, please tell me what yonder sun, sinking behind the peak of the Blue Ridge, would typify?"

"Certainly," answered the broker, "it is very like a bankrupt, making a fine show of his yellow gold before suspending payment."

"Ha! ha! Master Charles," cried his father; "so you have found your match at last! I warrant that Atherton can beat you making verses arter all."

"Never mind, Charlie," said his mother, who with maternal solicitude had come to his rescue; "never mind, my dear, "I'll answer for you. The sinking sun reminds us that domestic duties claim our attention."

"Right," said Caleb; "and the sooner we start the better."

"Ha, ha, ha! I think, Mr. Sunbeam, my mother has shaded you beautifully. Two acknowledged wits worsted by a lady! After all, give me the wit of a woman," cried the aggravating Charlie, leading the noble animal Lucy Atherton had ridden. "Come, Miss Sunbeam, permit me to assist you to the saddle, and to earnestly request that you do not break your neck before reaching the homestead."

"And if I did, Master Impertinence, what then?"

"Upon my word, I would never forgive you."

"And why not, pray?" persisted Lucy.

"It would sully my dreams of ambition."

"Perhaps it would be merciful to do so," she said, half musingly. "But come, Sir Shadow, I will try the ambling of your ambition, for in spite of you I will be first at the homestead."

"Will you!" cried Charlie, giving his horse the rein. "It takes two for a bargain, so here goes."

It was no use, however; Lucy flew on before him like the wind.

At last the autumn came, and the Athertons returned to Charleston. The summer of ease and relaxation had unfitted the broker for the stern duties of business, and his cares pressed heavily upon him. Never did his splendid residence seem so desolate and cheerless, never his office so close, so unwelcome. He chained his mind to business; but in his busiest moments would he find his imagination wandering back to the peaceful home of the Andersons, and he acknowledged with a sigh that his days of usefulness were over. He missed Charlie, too, the blithe, the manly Charlie; his bold and independent style of conversation, so different from the low and ready compliance he usually received. Even the disregard for his dignity and opinion had left an indelible and pleasing impression upon the old man's mind, and he came to the conclusion that the careless, poetical Charlie Anderson was fitted for a broker.

"Besides," argued Ralph, "who will continue my business after I am gone? Who will see that my house maintains the credit and reputation it has enjoyed during my lifetime? Who will conduct it with more independence than Charlie Anderson, after I have taught him? Yes, yes, I will have the boy down here forthwith; and over the prosaic ledger he will learn something more substantial, at least, than can be derived from writing verses to my daughter." The conclusion of this happy soliloquy afforded material for reflection, for Ralph Atherton relapsed into a profound reverie.

When Lucy Atherton was made aware of her father's intention, the first and noble impulse of her nature responded to the plan. The second was unfavorable. Pride whispered he was poor, humble, and the son of a farmer. Pride triumphed, winding its scaly folds round the generous impulse of reason.

Four years are quite an era; they suffice to eclipse the noblest creations of genius; they rear mighty structures; they despoil them; the visionary speculations of one period are often the fixed facts of another. The country house stood where years before Ralph Atherton had delivered his soliloquy. Wild, artistic nature, beautiful as wild, had seemingly fitted up the choice retreat as the Paradise of a poet. Never charmed the sunset so irresistibly as here, never seemed the sunrise so vigorous, so refreshing. Far to the east the rugged mountains of the Blue Ridge threw their bold outlines o'er the summer sky, while to the westward, through the green meadows of the Happy Valley, glistened the dreamy Potomac.

Charles Anderson had grown to manhood. His bearing was nobler, his figure more imposing, his mind more susceptible and matured. Unspotted by the contacts of the world, his thoughts were refined and fertilized by the contemplation of nature. Charlie was self-taught; what it availed him we shall see.

Caleb Anderson and the broker were comparatively strangers; nothing had transpired to generate ill feeling; they were rather strangers of necessity. At first their greetings were frequent and mutual; but the periods between them grew longer, and longer, until an annual visit was deemed sufficient. The farmer, no doubt, would have been coolly welcomed by those who honored the broker with their company; and indeed he cared as little for them as possibly they for him; for Caleb was a philosopher and totally devoid of ambition. Yet be it said, to the honor of Ralph, he forgot not his homely friend, and ever before departing to town, Caleb was invited to visit him. At this re-union, the restraints and formalities of polite life were thrown aside, and the farmer, with his unlearned eloquence, chatted of by-gone times unchecked, save when the laugh of Ralph would drown his sly allusions to the old broker's farming experience. Four years had touched the locks of Caleb, and left him hale and hearty as of yore. The house-dog looked older, and, if possible, lazier; but besides these, nothing had marked its flight, for peace and contentment reigned in the homestead of the farmer.

Of later years, though he alike was summoned with the rest, Charlie had not visited Ralph Atherton's. He knew that etiquette demanded his informal recognition, and that was quite sufficient. He had believed that Lucy remembered her girlish imaginings. He was, however, undeceived, and taught that an infinite boundary separates money from merit. Once, in an hour of weakness, had the young farmer chosen to forget that Lucy Atherton was a rich man's child, and had, with all the fervency of youth, declared a modest, manly, heartfelt love; but with a scorn, worthy a better cause, had the proud maiden thrust him from her side, and told him she would never marry one "beneath her station." Whom she could love "must have a station, merit and a name."

Among the many of Ralph's acquaintances, was one who, like himself, from lowliness, had climbed Ambition's ladder, and won his way to wealth. Proud of his golden apple, John Morton determined that his only son should taste the blessings it afforded. Naturally clever, and gifted with a retentive memory, Paul Morton, after spending a moderate fortune, managed to pass through college. Good-natured and prepossessing, he imagined the pains-taking life of a merchant "stupid beyond comparison."

"It is unnecessary that I should wear out life in father's counting-room. He has ample means, and, fortunately, is possessed of a son who appreciates its convenience. No, no! '*Ede, bibe, lude!*' as Horace hath it. That is my motto; I recognize no other."

Thus argued Paul Morton. Many young gentlemen admire his philosophy.

Tired of his extravagances, and feeling that some decided step was necessary to rescue him from perdition, John Morton determined to give his son a taste of country life. He knew that with Ralph, Paul must maintain a quiet course of living; and besides, the broker had a daughter with whom an acquaintance *might* ultimately result to advantage. So one bright and sunny day in August, Paul wended his way to the Happy Valley, armed with a letter of introduction. The summer waned, autumn put on her golden-hued attire; Paul still tarried at the Athertons.

The earliest streaks of an autumn morn shot up the peaks of the Blue Ridge, when Charles Anderson, equipped for hunting, stood on the porch of the homestead. Those who have imagined him devoid of manly beauty should have seen him at this moment. His close drab hunting coat, his rolling collar, open at the neck, his gun, slung gracefully from his shoulders, displayed his proportions to the greatest advantage. Beside him gambolled an intelligent looking spaniel, who, to attract his master's attention, sent many a sharp and ringing bark through the cool fragrance of the morning. He was evidently waiting; for at the next moment a servant approached, leading by the bridle the very animal Lucy Atherton had ridden years before. Springing impatiently to the saddle, and bidding the dog to follow, he wheeled quickly to the broad highway, and started at a rapid pace in the direction of the moorlands.

From the open road to the country seat of the Athertons, wound a broad and gently ascending carriage way. As the young man approached, he saw a lady, mounted like himself, signalizing from its summit with her handkerchief. Unable to divine her meaning, he gallantly responded with his own. Apparently satisfied, the rider began to descend the hill at a rapid pace. As they neared it became a question of nice discrimination which would first attain the point. Fortune favored the lady. Dashing around into the open road just in advance of Charlie, they rode some distance, wholly absorbed in the management of their horses.

"Ha, ha! Paul Morton," laughed a clear, silvery voice. "You distance me not so easily; nor imagine yourself the first whom I have led along this very road. I well remember that a farmer's son thought to o'ertake me here; but before such as he, Lucy Atherton lost not her stirrup. Neither is that the only lesson—"

"For which he stands indebted," broke in the deep voice of Charlie. "No, no! many and bitter are the pangs that *farmer's son* may trace to your instruction. Well, 'twas a noble triumph! and I leave ye to glean what comfort ye may from its recollection. Yet mark you, this," he added, earnestly, reining himself beside her, "the time will come when '*pride shall have its fall!*' The lessons you have taught, or still may teach, will then come home to nestle in the heart. You will remember then your early days; and when you thus remember, will repent!"

"Mr. Anderson," said Lucy, proudly, "is asked to grant my pardon, and he will, for my first light remark. As for the rest, no answer is required; so I have none to give. Whatever shall occur to me in after life, rests on my head alone. You have no one to censure save yourself. On others, less remorseless than a girl who ranks in *station* with the most renowned, your brilliant powers would meet a just reward; on *me* they fall unheeded, unreturned!"

"Lucy Atherton forgets she is living in Virginia, where no aristocracy but that of intellect, no rank but that of merit, no peerage-book save that of conscience, exists to blazon the deeds of virtue. When I presumed to tell you what I did, the Lucy Atherton of other days, the noble, pure, disinterested girl, impelled me so to speak. 'Twas not the being ye have grown since then, for Charles Anderson, humble though he is, values himself too highly."

"Mr. Anderson," retorted Lucy, blushing to the very temples, "your words become your character. Pursue the course ambition may suggest. Learn to be more forgiving. I always shall esteem you as my friend, and watch with friendly interest your career. But see," she added, "yonder rides Paul Morton; one who has station, merit, and a name. Tarry, and I will introduce you."

"Pardon me, Miss Atherton, that I am unambitious; ponder on my words—remember to keep the stirrup well, for the farmer's offspring will overtake you yet!"

"Really!" cried Lucy, throwing her glove, "I challenge him to the trial."

"Which challenge I accept," said Charlie, catching it from the dust with his whip.

"But, sir," said she, "who will decide the race?"

"*Years and Lucy Atherton!*" responded Charlie, galloping eagerly forward.

It would be difficult to define the feelings of Charles Anderson; hopes for the future, glances at the past, his late adventure, flitted alternately through his mind, suggesting the importance of some prompt exertion whereby to secure the position he coveted. So rapidly are dreams wafted on the wings of fancy, that Charlie already saw himself admired and honored. Imagination bore him into years, giving him glimpses of his future life. Hope whispered low, and told him "but to strive!" Free, illimitable, boundless imagination, lighting with hope the ever-distant future, throwing thy graceful shadow o'er the past; without thee, life were comfortless and cold. Folding the sleeper in thy magic arms, thou bearest him to loved and cherished scenes. Thou art the solace, the delight of age; the warm, reliant friend of early youth. Glorious imagination! Many are thy votaries; all love to revel in thy pleasing creations.

Charles's reverie was abruptly broken by the deep voice of a stranger.

"Can you tell me where Caleb Anderson resides? Being somewhat a sportsman, like yourself, I have sought the moorlands of the Potomac to indulge in this favorite pastime. I am told the farmer has a son, with whom, no doubt, you are acquainted."

"Sir," replied Charlie, bowing, "my name is Anderson. My father's house lies just three miles beyond. I will ride back with you if you desire—"

"No, no," hastily interrupted the stranger. "I see you are dressed for hunting. Let me ride onward to the homestead, localize myself, and await your return. Stop, here is my card."

"Thank you," said Charlie, laughingly. "I see you are determined to be rid of me, so I am off to shoot upon the moorlands. Good morning, sir."

Leaving Charlie to indulge in various surmises relative to the stranger, let us follow him to the homestead, and ascertain, if possible, his history. It was fashionable in the days of which we write, to have, at least, the initials of the name marked on the saddle-bow; and as the old Spanish adage, "that an honest name is a precious jewel," was much in vogue among the good farmers of Virginia, they considered initials suspicious.

"Joel Tennyson," for so the saddle-bow announced him, was apparently forty years of age, large and vigorous. His well-knit form showed little signs of decay; few were more commanding in appearance, more graceful or unstudied in their movements. His eyes were full and piercing; his features large and prominent; his hair, once dark, was slightly touched by the frosts of age; his voice was full, and his general bearing easy and confident. He had been bred a lawyer, had rapidly distinguished himself, and was now reaping the reward of his labor. Passionately fond of sporting, he was therefore companionable. By the advice of a brother sportsman, an early friend of Caleb's, he determined to spend his season of relaxation on the borders of the Potomac.

"This," he soliloquized, "must be the place. Now for a double object."

So throwing the bridle carelessly on the horse's neck, he approached Caleb, who was smoking his pipe in the doorway.

"Good morning," said he. "Does Caleb Anderson reside here?"

"Yes, sir—certainly," said Caleb. "Polly set a chair. John take the stranger's horse, and see that he is cared for.—Good morning," reiterated Caleb, looking slightly embarrassed, while Polly settled her cap, and cast deplorable glances at the breakfast table, from which they had just risen. "You find it dusty travelling, I imagine. Do you stop at Ralph Atherton's?"

"No, sir. I am a stranger to the western portion of Virginia. I reside at Washington." (Polly gave her cap another settle.) "I bring a letter from an old friend of yours."

"Do you?" said Caleb, drawing his specs from the pocket of his long-waisted vest. "'To Caleb Anderson, Present.' And a very nice present it is," he continued, turning it over and proceeding to break the seal. "'Caleb Anderson, Esq.' No, stranger, that's wrong; I aint a justice."

"Dear Sir,—My friend, Judge Tennyson, is desirous of spending a few weeks with you, and as Charlie is acquainted with the best shooting grounds, and the 'judge' is a man of eminence and learning, no doubt an acquaintance will result to their mutual advantage. By bestowing upon him what attention he may require, you will oblige your old friend, Philip Baxter."

"Mr. Tennyson, you are heartily welcome. So you are acquainted with Baxter? 'Twixt you and me, there's very little I wouldn't do to oblige an old friend; and especially Phil. But good gracious, you haven't had your breakfast! Polly! Polly! where on 'arth is Polly? Here, wife," said he, as Polly re-appeared, having donned a snow-white apron and ruffled cap, "here is a friend of Phil Baxter's, Mr.—"

"Tennyson," prompted the judge.

Polly curtesied.

"He is going to stop some time with us."

"We have been to breakfast," added Caleb, addressing Tennyson; "for farmers, you know, must be up and doing. Just step into the next room; wife will get you a breakfast as soon as may be, while I run out and see how John has served your horse."

All was bustle at the homestead. One instant Polly was deploring the looks of the table, although a table never looked more tidy. Meanwhile the worthy Caleb properly attended to the stranger's horse, and was telling the servant "how Tennyson was a great man and a judge," when Charlie came bounding up the lane at a rapid gallop.

"Has he come?" cried Charlie, hastily.

"Who?" asked Caleb, innocently.

"The stranger, to be sure."

"He has, and a fine fellow you were to let him seek his way alone! Where are the good manners I have taught you often and often? You

are well caught, for he is a great man and a judge; and an old friend of Phil Baxter's."

"Then he must be a gentleman," said Charlie, emphatically. "I'll go to the house and see him."

When he entered, Tennyson was breakfasting.

"Well, my young friend, what success on the moorlands?"

"None," replied Charlie, a shade passing over his countenance; "the day has been unlucky."

During the time he tarried at the Andersons, Joel Tennyson and Charlie were ever together. As they became better acquainted, the lawyer developed traits of character which influenced the ardent nature of Charlie Anderson strongly toward him, while he in turn regarded the young man with all the solicitude of a father. Into his listening year the young man poured his sorrows, and received in turn his sympathy.

"They are trifles, my dear boy; believe me, love is a lottery, and consider yourself fortunate to have lost. There lives no man who has not, like yourself, believed he was in love. Time, the great leveller, convinces him of his error."

"Have you been so convinced, sir?" asked Charlie.

Tennyson started. A melancholy depression of the eyebrows suggested unhappy thoughts. Tennyson was an extraordinary man; something altogether undefinable. His bearing denoted him accustomed to brilliant society. Maintaining the most imperturbable gravity, he spoke but little, and with a coolness which rarely deserted him. His dark and piercing eye, his features chiselled like a Brutus, gave him an indescribable air of dignity and grace; his voice was penetrating and melodious, his probity and integrity unimpeachable.

Once before when Charlie, seeking to gratify his curiosity, had introduced this subject, the dark cheek of Tennyson flushed, and he entreated him to converse on subjects recalling less painful remembrances; all this was strange. After riding some distance in silence, Tennyson turned his eye full upon his questioner, and said low and hurriedly:

"What would you think, my friend, were I to tell you a tale of love?"

"Concerning yourself?"

"Or of my friend, what matters it?"

"Do, I beseech you."

"Well, it shall be as you desire. Many years ago, it matters not where or when, I—that is my friend," said Tennyson, interrupting himself with a sombre smile, "conceived a passion for a young Englishwoman, beautiful as love. She did not please alone—she captivated. Having lately arrived in this country, no one knew her; but seeing her so beautiful and lonely, all felt interested. After a short acquaintance, my friend was fool enough to marry her."

"Why so, sir, if he loved her?"

"Wait. He married her and took her to his home. One day," said Tennyson, speaking very quickly, "he was waited upon by the officers of police, and learned that the *simple*, unprotected girl, whom he had sworn to cherish, was—*a fugitive from justice!*"

"Horrible! What are you telling me?"

"The truth, my dear fellow; she was a *common thief!*"

"But what did he do?"

"Do!" replied the lawyer, hoarsely; "he was a man of honor, and gave her to her proper keepers. Ha, ha! that cured him of woman. Engaging, captivating woman. God grant as much for you."

During this recital Tennyson became pale as death. As he concluded, he dashed eagerly forward, leaving his horror-stricken companion speechless with astonishment.

One of those singular fatalities with which the all-wise Creator sometimes visits his children, deprived Charles Anderson of his parents. On one of those beautiful evenings, so delicious after a close and sultry day, Charles Anderson had saddled his horse to take a ride by the moonlight. His father was seated in the doorway, entertaining Tennyson with a long account regarding one Polly Burton, that was; and he must have indulged in very many nonsensical remarks, for the identical Polly, knitting industriously on the porch, continued to "pooh" and "pshaw" down every assertion the old gentleman made.

"You see, Mr. Tennyson," persisted Caleb, "a great many wimmin are like baulky horses; they are deuced hard to catch, and good for nothing after you've got 'em. Now there was Polly Burton. You couldn't coax her, nor she would not be druv; so I just let her take her own way, and that's how I come to get her. Why, there goes our Charlie on the big chestnut mare! If I had one wish, Mr. Tennyson," continued Caleb, seriously, "it would be that the boy had never seen that young Miss Atherton. Now he values that horse because that young lady used to ride her. But I don't bleve she cares any more for him than—" and he glanced slyly at his wife, "than Polly Burton did for me."

As Caleb said, Charlie was leaving the homestead rapidly behind him. Little did he dream that his happy home would ere the morrow be reduced to ashes!

Nine o'clock came, and all was silent at the homestead. Anon, a red light gleamed from the bedroom window of the aged couple; then the roof displayed a bright, clear flame, which lighted everything around; then a window was burst open, and Joel Tennyson sprung, half stifled, to the greensward. At that instant a wild and startling cry of fire rung through the midnight air, and Charles Anderson dashed headlong up the walk. By this time the flames had covered nearly every part of the dry old building, and before assistance could be procured the house fell in with a tremendous crash. Charlie had seen the light, but arrived too late to save his parents. Every plan that filial affection could devise was tried to reach them, but without success. Throwing himself upon the ground, the young man gave way to the wildest agony, regardless of all efforts to console him.

But why dwell longer on this distressing picture? The funeral was over. The last sad rites due from the living to the dead were paid, and all that remained of Caleb and Mary Anderson reposed in the churchyard. Then did Joel Tennyson display those finer feelings that render man worthy of his image.

"My dear young friend," said he, taking the broken hearted Charlie by the hand, "be comforted. It is useless to regret; all men must die. Earth gives to all a resting-place, and we in turn must sink upon its bosom."

"The weather," he continued, trying to divert the young man's mind, "is a prototype of life, ever uncertain and perverse. See! yonder cloud has shot across the sun, and throws a sombre shadow over the earth. Thus in man's life do shadows come and go; clouds of misfortune pale the smile of hope, yet hope again dispels them."

"Ah, sir!" said Charlie, sadly, "talk not of hope to me. Hope hath departed; I am alone."

"Charlie," said Tennyson, pressing the young man's hand, "you know how much I love you. Had I a son I could not love him more dearly. I see that you are fitted for a lawyer. Accompany me to Washington; enter my office as a student. I have friends, have influence, and both shall be placed at your disposal. Come, will you not accept my proposition?"

"Do with me as you like," sighed Charlie. "Life has become indifferent."

In the bright lexicon of youth, grief hath a thousand meanings. Listening to the gentle consolation of Tennyson, his mind recovered its wonted tranquillity, and placing the farm under skilful management, he went with Joel Tennyson to study law.

Time shook the hour-glass in his palsied hand, and days flew into years. The clouds that had darkened the young man's life departed, and hope smiled as sweetly as ever.

Four years of shade and sunshine come and gone; of flitting days of happiness; of long, sad hours of sorrow; of broken ties, of new associations. How large a chapter in the romance of life may not that period comprise!

Ralph Atherton had been gathered to his fathers. Death, grim death, regardless of his gold, smote him alike with other men, and Lucy was left an orphan. To her the broker had bequeathed his wealth, and Joel Tennyson was named as her executor. Some sealed instructions accompanied the will; but these the old lawyer could never be prevailed upon to show. "All in good time," he would reply to Lucy's earnest request to see them. "Let us now act upon the will."

Paul Morton's philosophy had survived his manhood, and he was still a gentleman of leisure. Latterly, however, the supply of money he received from his father's estate (for John Morton was dead) was not so large or regular as before; and at last for an earnest demand for money, he received the following laconic epistle from his bankers:

"Boston, Mass.

"DEAR SIR,—For reply to yours of the 18th inst., we enclose you a draft payable on Messrs. —— of your city. This, the last receipt of your estate, we have found much difficulty in collecting. In conclusion, we would respectfully advise you to put the same out on bond and mortgage, and go to work. We have the honor to remain your obedient servants,

"—— Bankers.

"To Paul Morton, Esq."

The receipt of this letter overwhelmed the young gentleman with surprise. After mature reflection, he conceived and put in practice what he considered a most splendid scheme.

"I will go," thought he, "down to L——, and as I am always certain to win the first turn, I will stake all the money upon that chance. Then having ten thousand dollars, I will send it back to my laconic friends, and *go to work*. No one is aware of the desperate state of my finances, save that old hunks of a lawyer, and I will marry Lucy Atherton in spite of him!"

Carefully dressing himself, Paul sauntered leisurely to the gambling house. This time, however, the amount upon the table was *too large*, the cards turn slowly upward, the silver rake clenched firmly round the roll of bills, and Paul turned from the faro bank a beggar!

Carriage after carriage rolled to the residence of Mrs. De Howard. Brilliantly lighted, it sparkled from the distance like a starry constellation. Many gay hearts already graced its drawing-rooms, and the number was rapidly increasing. Mrs. De Howard ranked among that class of gold-worshippers, satirically styled the patrons of merit. Superlatively ignorant, and blest with unblushing assurance, she managed by a lavish expenditure of means, to gain at least the forbearance of the gifted and intelligent. To be the favorite of Mrs. De Howard, to attend her magnificent receptions, to revel in her select literary (?) dinners, was satisfaction for which a little flattery was but a slight return. The most distinguished are, alas! but human; and however divided may be their opinions respecting matters of state, they are unanimous as regards the luxuries of life. This weakness, with sagaciousness becoming her sex, the sprightly brunette discovered. Hence her table became the *ne plus ultra* of delicacies, and actuated by mutual interest, that mainspring of friendship, statesmen, authors, poets and pride, assembled to honor her receptions. Beyond all this, the impressive manner with which her guests were announced—for Pompey's *role* was as perfect in his line as that of Mario's—cajoled the vanity, as titles of unusual dimensions began to depend from the modest cognomens of the Puritans. Always giving the title in full, and often appending something by way of parenthesis, he became in time to be considered as the most skilful of ushers. Thus, as Joel Tennyson ascended the marble steps, arm in arm with Charles Anderson, he was greeted by the negro with touching politeness.

"We are happy to recognize you, Massa Tennyson. Hab your friend a title?"

"No, Pompey; he is my partner, Charles Anderson, and at present possesses only the title of an 'honest man.'"

"Yes, sah."

"Judge Tennyson and his partner, Charles Anderson, Esq.!" rung through the corridor the stentorian voice of the usher.

"Thank you," laughed the judge, preparing to enter the drawing-room. "Pompey is a capital representative of the airy brunette, making a large show of little information."

"Massa Tennyson am a gemman who can appreciate talent," soliloquized the delighted darkey, turning to announce "Paul Morton."

Madame De Howard welcomed Judge Tennyson with politeness, while her eye reposed with favor on his young protege.

"Madame, I beg you will consider Mr. Anderson under your protection, and introduce him to your guests with that temperate discretion which ever characterizes your movements."

"Certainly," she replied. "I shall be most happy to keep him by my side for half an hour, to excite envy."

"As you please," laughed Tennyson, bowing.

"Mr. Anderson," said the brunette, as they sought the head of the drawing-room together, "this roof is the temple where merit, however high, talents, however low, find access. If, after having conversed with a gentleman, I find him comprehensive, I take him under my patronage." Charlie slightly smiled. "But," and the blood of the Howards began to simmer, "if I find him without talents, I desert him immediately."

Charlie did not reply. He was evidently lowering in the brunette's opinion.

"I hope, madame," he said, at last, "your past exertions have been more successful than the present. Because," and Charlie remembered the advice of his friend, "the elegance of your drawing-room, the taste displayed in its arrangements, have quite bewildered me."

The good sense of Charlie rose above par with the brunette. "No one directs this room but myself, and I take care to have it arranged mechanically and artistically. But come, allow me to introduce you." So approaching a group embracing Paul Morton, Lucy Atherton, and a host of others, she said, "Allow me to present Charles Anderson, a young man whom I am proud to honor."

Lucy Atherton, with a slight inclination of the head, commenced conversing with Paul Morton. A young lady, preserved in crimson, said "Good evening;" whereupon a young lady in white pursed her lips and frowned. Charlie was much embarrassed.

"Have you been sleighing yet?" he remarked to the crimson beauty.

"Sir?" asked she, elevating her eye-brows.

"Have you been sleighing yet?" repeated he.

"O yes, very—" A general but subdued titter ensued. Charlie was evidently a *marked* man.

Tennyson had regarded this scene from a distance. He now drew within ear-shot.

"Ladies," said Paul Morton, looking profoundly serious, "how very stupid; one would imagine its genius stood among us. I wonder how long it will pervade?" and he slightly glanced at Anderson.

"Until you leave the circle, sir!" spoke a deep voice beside him.

Paul turned. Into the very portals of his soul gleamed the dark eye of Tennyson.

"Well, my young jester, bells would become you better than I imagined. Miss Atherton," he continued, "it is my duty to communicate some painful intelligence. Those," he added, bending his eye severely upon Paul, "who so wantonly insult another, are deserving of little mercy."

What the old lawyer whispered to his ward, none but Paul Morton might divine. The effect produced was startling; Lucy recoiled from her informant, and fainted in the arms of Anderson.

"'Tis false!" gasped Morton, starting suddenly forward, as the strong arm of Charles bore her to the carriage.

"Young man!" replied the indignant lawyer, chaining the villain down with his eagle eye, "you know I would not *lie*, to save my life. Besides I can produce the *proofs*. But," he continued, less sternly, "I have no wish to crush you. Go!—turn from your evil course, seek to regain that virtue you have lost; strive to be truly honest, and I will not molest you."

"Sir!" said Morton, grasping his hand, "I do not deserve your kindness. I am indeed a beggar and a gambler. I will act upon your advice. I will forsake my present course of life, and learn for the future a lesson from the past."

Paul Morton left the residence of Mrs De Howard comparatively a happy man. Long had conscience upbraided his reckless course. His father's death giving him unlimited control of fortune, he had pursued his boyish philosophy until it effected his ruin. Leaving the giddy circles of the town, wrapped in his own reflections in the seclusion of a country home, Paul Morton forgot his early vices, and commenced life anew and with a purpose. The *double* object of Joel Tennyson was attained. Paul never married Lucy Atherton,

Never was Joel Tennyson so maliciously busy as when the estate of Ralph Atherton demanded his attention. He informed Lucy that for any information respecting the same, she must apply to his partner to whom its settlement had been entrusted. No doubt, under this formula of business, the old lawyer cherished some secret plan; but however that might be, he strictly adhered to his purpose.

Being thus unavoidably thrown together, the interviews between Miss Atherton and her lawyer, though at first awkward and embarrassing, became in time mutually agreeable and pleasing. Never was the settlement of an estate attended with more perplexities or impediments. It became necessary for Miss Atherton's lawyer to consult with his fair client two or three times a week, and Joel Tennyson began openly to hint that, instead of settling the estate according to custom, his partner was seeking to subvert it to his own use and enjoyment.

Since the disgrace of Paul Morton, Lucy Atherton had changed. Her eyes were opened to the fact that man's nobility rested in himself, rather than in the accident of birth. For years she had beheld the slow, unwavering rise of humble talent, until at last he whom she had regarded as a serf, had far outstripped her station or pretensions. She loved him, always, ever; even when a dominant though sickly sense of pride stifled the generous impulses of her heart, and caused her to regard a farmer's son as one to *touch her hand, too lowly born*. And now, when pride had fallen and the girl reverted with a sigh to earlier years, the words the young man uttered on the road, "When you remember thus your early days," came back with tenfold force to her heart, and made her life a blank without a hope.

One day Lucy wrote to her lawyer to gain some information touching her estate. Eight o'clock came, but Charlie Anderson, generally so punctual, did not make his appearance. At length the sound of a slow, firm footfall caught her ear, and the next instant Joel Tennyson was announced. Wheeling a chair near the fire, the old lawyer drew from his pocket a large package of papers.

"My daughter," said he, "I have chosen to fulfil this appointment because I greatly desired to see you, and give you some advice. I am growing old, and may at any time be called away; therefore I feel it my duty to speak frankly to you and without reserve. My partner, Mr. Anderson, I have every reason to believe, soon intends to marry."

All color left the cheek of Lucy Atherton. The old lawyer perceived it and continued, "when that event transpires, I shall retire and leave him to conduct my business. Your father and myself were friends in early life. Then, he was but an humble clerk who dusted the counting-room of the Lelands! During one of my visits to Charleston, I had occasion to entrust him with some business. The promptness and fidelity the young man displayed on that occasion, won him my esteem, and it was owing to my assistance that he afterwards became their successor. When, after a long career of business life, your father visited Caleb Anderson, the farmer's son, by his nobility of soul, attracted his attention. Then, remembering the kindness he had felt, he determined to bestow it upon another. The kind intention of the broker's heart, you were the means of frustrating."

Lucy sobbed loudly.

"My daughter," continued Tennyson, kindly, "when afterwards you discarded the young man, you struck a blow where you were least aware; for if your father cherished one darling hope, it was that you should marry Charlie Anderson! About that time you became acquainted with Paul Morton, a young man of fair exterior but of thoughtless and indolent demeanor. Him, I was satisfied *you never loved*. He was incapable of loving. Your father's knowledge of the world confined itself to business; and being much perplexed, he wrote me a long and anxious letter. That letter I have carefully preserved.

"In return, I urged him not to approach Paul Morton, as a familiar intercourse would cause you to forget him; also by my advice, the old broker allowed Charles to express his natural indignation by discontinuing his visits, and it was then arranged that I should come to the 'Happy Valley' and spend my 'shooting season.' Upon reflection, I obtained a letter of introduction to Caleb Anderson; demanded his hospitality, which, you know, was cheerfully extended. In the person of the farmer's son, I found all that the most fastidious lady could require, besides he possessed a mind highly susceptible and intelligent, and was, upon the whole, a young gentleman of superior attainments. During the time I tarried there, it pleased our Heavenly Father to deprive the young man of his parents. The lively and heartfelt grief he displayed affected me deeply, and when, with most unworthy motives, you refused to accompany your father to their funeral, I determined that you should never marry Charlie Anderson.

"Comfort yourself, my daughter, I have not told you all. The young man whose entire confidence was bestowed upon me, accompanied me to Washington and entered my office as a student. His merit began speedily to be recognized, as merit always will, and it was my duty to encourage him by making him a partner; that encouragement he received. In time your father died, and gave me his last expression of esteem by making me his executor. Accompanying his will were some sealed instructions which you have often desired to see. I came this evening to gratify you," and the old lawyer produced them from the bundle.

"It is simply a marriage contract between you and Charlie Anderson, and bears on its margin Ralph Atherton's blessing upon his children. My daughter," continued Tennyson, "it was wrong thus to tamper with your happiness, however the fashion of the times demands. But you may yet recover what is lost. Paul Morton, even the proud, impetuous Paul Morton, has seen the error of his way, and left his former vices, to repent. And now, my daughter, I have you to reflect and to decide. Here is the marriage contract—sign it and be happy!

When Joel Tennyson left the presence of Lucy Atherton, an expression of the deepest satisfaction rested upon his features. To what this was owing we are unable to say, save that the fingers of Lucy were somewhat discolored, as though she had touched ink, and was *betrothed*.

Charlie Anderson had believed himself recovered from his boyish passion. Yet, trust me, gentle reader, the disease still lingered around. He had loved, been rejected, and had striven to forget, but it was no use. In the emphatic words of Cuttle, "The more he tried to, the more he couldn't."

Reader, were you present at the wedding? The bridegroom was a handsome fellow, wasn't he? and as for the bride——

Well, Charles and Lucy Atherton were married. Joel Tennyson was present and partitioned the property according to law. The contract was read, the blessing of Atherton pronounced upon his children, and everybody was satisfied with the display.

One little circumstance occurred which is still enveloped in mystery. Among the costly presents of the bride, was laid a small discolored riding glove, the gift of Charlie Anderson.

Reader, you who have seen the rise, the progress and fall of pride, let not this moral pass by unheeded. Cherish your nobler impulses, cling not too closely to illusive hopes, and learn how thankless is the task of those who seek to stifle merit.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

EFFIE ELLIS'S VALENTINES.

BY MAY MOSS.

"GIRLS, next week is St. Valentine's week," said Effie Ellis, running up to a group of young ladies in the hall at Mrs. Moore's boarding-school.

"So it is," cried a half dozen.

"I wonder who of us will get the most valentines," said one.

"I got the most last year," said a proud little beauty, named Lizzie Dorr.

"Well, girls, I want to tell you something," said Effie, who had been vainly endeavoring to make herself heard amid the uproar. "Suppose we all put our heads together and write a valentine to send to Ed Moore; he'll think it is from that haughty Miss Curtis, and then if he should send a reply, wouldn't it be fun?"

"O, yes, but what kind of a valentine shall we write?"

"Write one like Albert's, a real 'take off' on his personal appearance, he says."

This was finally agreed upon, and after some teasing they obtained a promise from Effie, to write it for them.

St. Valentine's day arrived, and when the school bell sounded, Effie entered the school-room carrying the precious valentine which had been read to the girls and pronounced "just the thing," "excellent." During recitation hours, the valentine was hastily enclosed in an envelope and handed to one of the day scholars who was to carry it to the post-office.

More than one little heart fluttered when Mrs. Moore informed her scholars that she was intending to give them a party on May-day, to celebrate the marriage of her son. What a hubbub of voices there was when the girls, gathered in groups in the hall, were discussing the important news, and eagerly talking of preparations for the party. But where was Effie? She cared not who was to be May Queen. She had heard Mrs. Moore, to all appearances, like the rest; but instead of joining the others, she stole quietly out and ran swiftly down the shaded walk to the old moss seat by the brook; there throwing herself down upon the grass she sobbed as if her heart were breaking.

Presently she became calm. "What if I do admire Ed's merry eye and handsome mustaches?" said Effie aloud. "I don't love him; let him marry that proud, cold-hearted Miss Curtis. I'm sure I hope she wont freeze him."

"Do you?" said the voice of Ed Moore, near her. Effie sprang up and was hurrying away, but a strong arm thrown around her gently drew her back—but, dear reader, it's time you and I were walking towards the house, we shall not be missed. * * * *

"What are you laughing at, Ed? some old love-letter?" and Effie Ellis, now Mrs. Moore, playfully snatched the paper from his hand, carelessly glanced at its contents, then with a look of surprise, exclaimed, "Where did you get this?"

"Out of the post-office, to be sure, last valentine day."

"What did you think of my sending you such a valentine with my own name signed; offering myself in that style?" said Effie.

"Think? why that a romantic school-girl wanted a handsome husband she was afraid she should not get, unless she did make use of leap year privileges."

"Coxcomb! but it happens you received this valentine through mistake, instead of one we girls intended to send you; it was written for cousin Clare."

"I'm exceedingly sorry, Effie, but then I suppose it did not make much difference, did it?"

"To be sure it did; think you I wanted to marry such a homely—"

"Take care, Mischief, don't forget the old moss seat, and a certain morning in April," cried Ed, laughingly, as he stepped out upon the piazza.

GAS ENGINE.

Many attempts have been made to construct gunpowder and explosive gas engines, but Dr. Drake of Philadelphia, is the first inventor who has succeeded in harnessing this mighty agent, and making it subservient to driving machinery. In external appearance, Dr. D.'s machine resembles a horizontal engine. It has a piston and cylinder, but in its other parts a number of new devices are involved that are not required for steam. Motion is produced by exploding gas in the cylinder, first behind and then in front of the piston, just the same in effect as steam is employed.—*Philadelphia Ledger*.

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WHOLESALE AGENTS.

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE BRIDEGROOM COMETH.

BY MYRA LYDDIE DONELSON.

Haunts, by which I've loved to wander,
Woodland, brook, and sylvan dell—
Friends that I have loved so dearly—
I must bid you now farewell;
Gaze my last upon your features,
Ere I leave your ingle-side,
For there's soon to be a bridal,
And I am to be the bride.

Brother, soon among thy loved ones,
Thou wilt look for me in vain!
Others still may kindly greet thee,
But the lost comes not again.
She, who in her dreaming childhood,
Roamed with thee through forests wide,
In thy strong arms, oft supported,
Goeth soon from thee a bride.

Sisters, dress me for my bridal,
Not in gems and jewels rare—
But in pale, pure robes enfold me,
With blue violets in my hair;
Ne'er again my hand may cull them,
Where they kiss the sparkling tide—
For the day is early coming
When I am to be a bride.

Mother, lay thy hand in blessing
Once more on thy darling's brow;
For no more will she beside thee
Kneel as she is kneeling now.
Weak and trembling, doth she leave thee,
Nevermore to seek thy side;
For the bridegroom cometh, mother,
And thy child will be his bride!

Lay my harp beside my pillow—
All its mournful strains are o'er;
I shall sing a lay more joyous,
When I've reached the other shore.
Through the valleys, dim and silent,
My pale bridegroom leadeth me;
Yet my heart regrets not, only
When I think of leaving thee!

For I've striven long with anguish
Thy fond eyes might never see—
Wept, and prayed, with weary yearning,
From my earth-chains to be free.
So I grieve not that I'm going
To the land of which I've sung,
Though I'm leaving all that love me,
To become a bride while young.

Pale and still my bridegroom cometh—
Icy chill I feel his breath—
Cold, white arms he folds around me,
For my bridegroom's name is Death!
Yet I close my eyes in slumber,
Like a child upon his heart,
For my hand has long been weary,
Sinking, and not finding rest!

Make my bridal couch at even,
When the stars beam soft and pale,
When the willows weep and tremble
By the brookside in the vale;
In the stillness of the forest,
Where the shades fall dark and wide—
Leave me there! yet O forget not
Her that in life's spring-time died!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

A QUARTER-DECK STORY.

BY CHARLES CASTLETON.

Our ship lay at Diamond Point, below Calcutta, and close by lay another American ship, belonging to New York, which was both owned and commanded by Captain Lemuel Rowe. I had known Rowe when he was a poor boy, and I knew that he had gained his present position of wealth by a peculiar stroke of luck. His wife was with him, and she was one of the most beautiful women I ever saw, being not only eminently handsome, but possessing one of those faces which at once appeal to the nobler and purer affections of the heart, and excite respect. In Calcutta, she had been the acknowledged belle, though some of England's fairest flowers of nobility were there.

One day, Captain Rowe came on board our ship to take dinner. I had renewed the acquaintance of bygone times, and I found him rather proud, than otherwise, of having once been poor. After dinner, we lighted our cigars and went upon deck, where we sat down and enjoyed the cool evening breeze that came sweeping up the great river. Thus had we spent an hour, when Captain Fifield, our own commander, asked Rowe if he had any objections to giving us a little sketch of his life.

"The fact is," said Fifield, "we have heard a thousand rumors concerning your marriage, and if you have no objections—"

"Not at all," broke in Rowe, with a smile. He was a perfect pattern of a man—tall, powerful, and handsome. "They have their yarns on the forecastle, where Jack tells his adventures; and I don't know why we may not have a story of the quarter-deck. At all events, you shall have one; so listen:

"Few youths can well be poorer than I was at the age of fourteen. I had just rags enough to cover my nakedness, and that was all. I had no stick with a bundle on it, for I had nothing to make a bundle of. In that plight, I found myself in the city of New York. One night, I slept on one of the wharves, and on the next morning, I begged my breakfast at the kitchen of a gentleman's house, and then started on the search for work. I was obliged to beg a dinner, which I got on board a North River sloop. About three o'clock, I came to a great store, where I asked for work, as I had done at a hundred others above it on the same street. The owner's name was Osgood—Laban Osgood. He asked me all about my former life, and then wished to know if I would go to sea. I told him yes. Then he told me there was a ship just ready to sail, of which he was part owner, and in which he intended to take passage with his family, and that she was short of men. He gave me a letter to the captain, and then sent a boy to conduct me to the ship, which lay at one of the North River slips. The captain's name was Bailey. He was a bluff, stern man, but honorable and just. I informed him that I had lived upon the water about Long Island Sound nearly half the time since I was big enough to sail a boat, and though I had never been to sea, yet that I felt sure I could very soon learn the ropes. He asked me a host of questions, and finally told me that he should be glad to have me ship for the voyage to Canton and back.

"I think that that moment was about the happiest I had ever experienced up to that time—in fact, I know it was. After I had signed the papers, I received an advance of two months' wages, and with this money I purchased such clothing as I needed, and on the evening of the next day, I looked as spruce as any of them. On the third day after I had shipped, we hauled out into the stream, and were towed out by a steamer; and then Mr. Osgood and his family came on board. His family only consisted of himself and wife, and one child—a daughter named Florence, who was then only twelve years of age. Mr. Osgood had a great desire to go out, partly on business, and as his wife and daughter were anxious to see the world, he readily consented to take them with him. He said he had been confined to his counting-house for twenty years, and he was now going to take a wider range just for the air and variety; and his wife said the same, save that she had been confined to the coach and drawing-room, instead of the counting-house. But they were a happy trio, and were bound to enjoy themselves. This was the merchant's second wife. He had had no children by his first wife.

"It is natural for children to seek children's company; but I might have been in their company for years, and I should never have dared to advance beyond the distant respect I felt for the favored ones. But Florence was not so reserved. Remember—she was twelve, and I only fourteen, and I, too, the only boy on board. She sought my company, and by the time we had been at sea a month, she could not have clung more fondly to an own brother than she did to me. Her father smiled upon our sports, and more than once did he get me relieved from duty, that I might entertain his child. Of course, I don't wish to flatter myself, but I must be allowed to say that I was always called a remarkably good-looking boy.

"Well, we were on board that ship a year, and whenever Mr. Osgood went on shore, he invariably took me with him as a sort of *valet*. Of course, the parents dreamed not of the feelings which were springing up in the souls of those two children; if they had, the companionship would have been severed in a moment. When we reached New York, we were both a year older, and I loved that gentle girl with a love that occupied my whole soul—and I had told her so; and, more still, she had told me the same in return.

"For a year after this, Mr. Osgood kept me in his store as a messenger, and gave me a home beneath his own roof. At the end of this time, I was sixteen and Florence fourteen. I felt quite a man then in my love, and had even talked to Florence about being married. She was still the same, loving me with her whole soul, and thinking no harm of it. Mr. and Mrs. Osgood seemed to take no notice of our intimacy, and so our lives moved on another year in the same smooth way. When I was seventeen years old—it was during the very week on which my birthday occurred—Mrs. Osgood discovered the secret of our love. Florence told me of it. But they said nothing to me of it, only on the next day the merchant informed me that he had secured an excellent chance for me to go to sea once more. It was for an India voyage, and I was informed that if I studied the profession as I might, I should have a mate's berth on the next voyage. This was for the purpose of keeping me at sea.

"Before I went, I saw Florence alone, and she swore that she would never marry any but me. So I went away as happy as need be. When we reached Calcutta, our second mate died. The third mate was promoted, and I took his place. When we returned, I saw Florence, and she was the same as ever. I next went as second mate, for I had worked hard, and studied well. When I was nineteen, I took the office of first mate, and gave my employers and my captain perfect satisfaction. When I returned from this voyage, I was going on towards twenty-one years of age. I had laid up some three thousand dollars, and now resolved to ask Mr. Osgood for his daughter's hand. I went to his house, and did so. At first, he seemed to be perfectly astonished—and then angry. He accused me of seducing away his child's affections, and ended by ordering me to leave his house and never to enter it again.

"I will not attempt to tell you how I felt. I remember very well that I left, and that for a while I was blinded by passion; and during that time, I was foolish enough to speak to some of my shipmates of the subject in my vengeful mood. But when I became cool, and reflected upon all that Osgood had done for me, my feelings began to take a new turn. I saw that he had been more than a father to me, for few fathers could have extended to me such patronage as he had done. I knew the feelings of the aristocratic parents, and when I came to reflect upon my own circumstances and position, I felt that I had no just cause of complaint. I had known, three years before, the sentiments of the parents upon the subject, and I could not blame them now for adhering to their former resolution.

"It was nearly a month after the meeting with the merchant, that the train of circumstances commenced which gave me a wife. Our ship lay at the wharf ready for her load, and one evening, while I was alone upon the quarter-deck, two men came on board, and after a variety of questions, they asked me if I was not the man who had had something to do with Mr. Laban Osgood. I informed them that I was. They then asked me if I had not sworn that I would be revenged upon him.

"By some strange freak of thought, the idea at once came to me that these two men had some evil intent upon the old merchant, and wished for my assistance; and with it came the determination to work for the old man's good, if I could, for I could not forget all the good he had done for me. So I answered them in such a way as to lead them on. I pretended to be very anxious for vengeance, and they believed me. Gradually I learned that one of them had just been released from prison, where he had been confined four years upon complaint of Mr. Osgood for stealing; and that the other had been turned away from the merchant's employ on account of his dishonesty, and that he had also lost three or four opportunities for a place, on account of Osgood's making known his crime to those who would otherwise have hired him. O, I pretended to be very savage, and thus I gleaned the whole of their plot.

"'He's ruined us,' said one of them, 'and now we'll take amends at our own will."

"I saw clearly that they were desperate characters, and that they knew no such thing as moral fear. When their plan was all opened, it amounted to this: They meant to enter the house at night and rob it of all that was worth carrying off, and to kill any one who interfered. As to Mr. Osgood, they would rather kill him than not, and I could see that the fear of possible detection was all that withheld them. But their chief object in hunting me out, was to get a plan of the house, for they had never been inside of it, and to gain my further assistance, if possible. I gave them a thorough plan of the merchant's house, describing where he kept his money when he had it by him, and where all the gold and silver plate was. They then stated that they meant to make the attempt on the next night, and asked me if I could go with them. I told them I would if I could, but I feared that I should have to start for Boston on the very next morning, and that I must be gone several days. Yet I hoped they would succeed—I gave some more severe flings at Osgood—and then told them over again how they could gain entrance to the house. I told them to come to the ship on the next day, and if I was not there, they would know I had gone to Boston. But I begged of them, if I did go, to let me see them when I got back. This they promised, and then they went away.

"On the next morning, I went to the street where Mr. Osgood lived, but I did not call. I had thought of placing them on their guard, but I feared they might thus be led to thwart the very object I had in view, which was to arrest the villains and place them beyond the power of doing more harm. I kept myself concealed all day, and when evening came, I went to the police-office and obtained two good stout men to go with me and watch the movements of the robbers. We concealed ourselves in a narrow alley directly opposite Osgood's house, and there we remained until midnight. It was nearly fifteen minutes after the city clocks had struck twelve that we saw two men come crouching along under the shade of the buildings, upon our side of the street. They reached a point opposite the merchant's house, and then crossed over. At that moment, I saw a light in one of the front chambers. It was gone, however, in a moment, but it sufficed to show me that some one was up in the house.

"I could see by the starlight that these were the men who had visited me the evening before. They stopped when they reached the door of the house, but only for a moment. Then they went to the gate of the carriage-way and climbed over. I knew where they would enter the house, for I had explained to them the easiest way.——I want you to remember one thing here. I had not in the least set them on to this work, for they were fully resolved before they saw me, and had their time set. All I had done was towards trapping them.——We waited a few moments, until we imagined that the villains would have had time to enter the house, and then we went after them. I still had a key to the small gate—one which I had never given up—and thus we passed easily into the back yard. We found one of the kitchen windows open, and in we went. We listened a few moments in the kitchen, but could hear nothing, and I then started to lead the way up stairs. The kitchen was a story lower than the front hall on the street, and just as we reached this hall, I heard a quick cry in the hall above, and then followed the shuffling of feet. I knew that cry. I had a policeman's club, and grasping it firmly in my hand, I leaped up the stairs. At the further end of the hall, I saw a female form, and a man close upon her with a knife in his hand, and I heard him say, with an oath:

"'Make the least noise, and I'll let out your heart's blood on the spot!'

"Next I heard a low, supplicating moan from the female. It was Florence—I knew it well. With one wild bound, I leaped forward, and with all my power in that one arm, I brought the thick lignumvitæ club down upon the villain's head. He sank upon the floor like a lump of lead, without sound or motion.

"'Where is the other one?' I asked, as I caught Florence to my arms.

"'In my father's room," she gasped.

"So into the old man's room I hastened, with the officers after me. We found the old merchant upon the floor, and the robber just in the act of raising his knife. My club descended upon his head ere his knife could fall, and he fell sideways upon the carpet—and the old man was uninjured.

"The officers now came forward and lifted the villain up, but he was still senseless, and so they bore him down. But the man in the hall was dead. I had broken his skull completely in. With Florence half fainting in my arms, I told Mr. Osgood the whole story, from first to last; and then I learned that his wife was very unwell, and that he and his child had been up with her. Thus had they been in the robbers' way.

"'Mr. Osgood,' I said, as I placed Florence upon a seat, 'you have been very kind to me—more than a father—and I hope this act may be some faint mark of my gratitude. If I have saved your life, it is no more than you have done for me. You may rest now, sir, for your enemies are past harming you.'

"With that, I turned and left the house in company with the officers; and the fellow whom I had last struck did not recover until we had reached the station-house. On the next day, Mr. Osgood sent for me to come to his house. I will not tell you all he said, for you can imagine something from the circumstances. But I will tell you one thing he said, and what he did at the same time. He took his daughter's hand and placed it in mine; and he told me I had saved the dear girl's life, and he made me promise that I would never forsake her, never treat her unkindly, but always love and protect her. And God knows, gentlemen, I have kept my promise truly and well. The old gentleman has been dead now three years, and I have come to settle up the last of his business here. Florence would not let me come alone. I was her companion during her first voyage, and she would be mine now."

EXTRAORDINARY FEAT.

The family of Tichborne date their possession of the present patrimony, the manor of Tichborne, so far back as 200 years before the Conquest. When the Lady Mabella, worn out with age and infirmity, was lying on her death-bed, she besought her husband, as her last request, that he would grant her the means of leaving behind her a charitable bequest, in a dole of bread to be distributed to all who should apply for it annually on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary. Sir Roger her husband readily acceded to the request, by promising the produce of as much land as she could go over in the vicinity of the park, while a certain brand or billet was burning, supposing that, from her long infirmity (for she had been bed-ridden some years), she would be able to go round a small portion only of his property. The venerable dame, however, ordered her attendants to convey her to the corner of the park, where, being deposited on the ground, she seemed to receive a renovation of strength, and, to the surprise of her anxious and admiring lord, who began to wonder where this pilgrimage might end, she crawled around several rich and goodly acres. The field which was the scene of Lady Mabella's extraordinary feat, retains the name of "Crawls" to this day. It is situated near the entrance of the park, and contains an area of thirty-three acres. Her task being completed, she was re-conveyed to her chamber, and summoning her family to her bedside, predicted its prosperity while the annual dole existed, and left her malediction on any of the descendants who should be so mean or covetous as to discontinue or divert it, prophesying that when such should happen, the old house would fall, and the family name would become extinct from the failure of heirs male, and that this would be foretold by a generation of seven sons being followed immediately after by a generation of seven daughters and no son. The custom in the reign of Henry II. founded, thus continued to be observed for centuries; and the 25th of March became the annual festive day of the family. It was not until the middle of the last century that the custom was abused; when, under pretence of attending Tichborne Dole, vagabonds, gipseys, and idlers of every description, assembled from all quarters, pilfering throughout the neighborhood; and, at last, the gentry and magistrates complaining, it was discontinued in 1796. Singularly enough, the baronet of the day had seven sons; and, when he was succeeded by the eldest, there appeared a generation of seven daughters, and the apparent fulfilment of the prophecy was completed by the change of the name of the late baronet to Doughty, under the will of his kinswoman.—*Winchester (Eng.) Observer.*

THE MOON.

"If the moon *is* made of green cheese," said a philosophical old lady once upon a time, in the town of Rye, on Long Island Sound, "then that settles the question about its being inhabited; 'cause everybody knows that cheese *is* inhabited!"

Good reasoning; but Lord Ross (whose famous telescope is one of the wonders of the world) don't seem to think so. He says, in a late communication to an English paper:

"Every object on the surface of the moon, of the height of one hundred feet, has been distinctly seen through my instrument; and I have no doubt that, under very favorable circumstances, it would be so with objects of sixty feet in height. On its surface are craters of extinct volcanoes, rocks, and masses of stone almost innumerable. I have no doubt whatever, that this building, or such an one as we are now in, if it were upon the surface of the moon, would be rendered distinctly visible by these instruments. But there are no signs of habitations such as ours; no vestiges of architectural remains to show that the moon is, or ever was, inhabited by a race of mortals similar to ourselves. It presents no appearance which would lead to the supposition that it contained anything like the green fields and lovely verdure of this beautiful world of ours.

"There is no *water* visible; not a sea, or a river, or even the measure of a reservoir for supplying a town or a factory. All is desolate!"

"Hence," says Dr. Scoresby, "would arise the reflection in the mind of the Christian philosopher, '*Why* had this devastation been? Was it a *lost* world? Had it suffered for its transgression? Had it met the fate which Scripture foretold us was reserved our world? All, *all* is mysterious conjecture."—*Knickerbocker.*

ASTONISHED!

A newspaper in one of the midland counties of Pennsylvania relates the following:

"A singular accident occurred on the Reading Railroad on Monday last. As the morning train was approaching Manayunk, the cylinder-head of the engine blew out, and with such tremendous violence, that, at the distance of forty yards, it struck a man who was walking between two others on the opposite track, carrying away the top of his head entirely, leaving his companion uninjured, but—considerably astonished."

"Considerably *astonished!*" We should *think* so. A man—a friend—is walking by your side, along the public highway. You are talking as you jog along, when presently your friend has half of his head completely blown off by an explosion, and you are "*considerably astonished!*" That is to say, the man was quite *surprised!* It seems to us that the use of this word, in this place, is almost as ridiculous as the Frenchman who said to an American friend, that he was "very much *dissatisfied*," having just heard of the death of his father!—*Harper's Magazine.*

KILL OR CURE.

When old Bogus's wife fell ill, he sent for a doctor as sordid and avaricious as himself. Before the doctor saw the patient, he wished to have an understanding with the miserly husband.

"Here's forty dollars," said Bogus, "and you shall have it whether you cure my wife or kill her."

The woman died, and the doctor called for the fee.

"Did you kill my wife?" asked Bogus.

"Certainly not!" replied the indignant doctor.

"Well, you didn't cure here?"

"You know she's dead."

"Very well, then, leave the house in double quick time," said Bogus. "A bargain's a bargain. It was kill or cure, and you did neither."—*Eccentric Anecdotes.*

A WILL IN RHYME.—A Chancery Lane lawyer died lately in London, and the following was actually probated as his last will and testament:

"As to all my earthly goods, now and to be in store,
I give them to my beloved wife and sons forevermore;
I give all freely—I no limit fix;
This is my will, and she's executrix."

Jester's Picnic.

An old gentleman of eighty-four having taken to the altar a young damsel of sixteen, the clergyman said to him:

"You will find the font at the opposite end of the church."

"What do I want with the font?" asked the old gentleman.

"I beg your pardon," said the clerical wit. "I thought you had brought the child to be christened."

Gen. Wise, while stumping it through Virginia, previous to his election, was annoyed one day by two ardent followers of the K. N.'s. Wise paused in his speech, and turning to those bloods, pointed his long, skinny finger, *a la* Randolph, at the offenders, and said: "Young men! I am to be your next governor. You will probably be in the penitentiary; and you may depend upon it, you will have to serve out your time!" They didn't annoy him any more.

A lady walking on Broadway a short time ago, a gentleman's button caught in the fringe of her shawl. Some moments elapsed before the parties were separated.

"I am attached to you, madam," said the gentleman, good-humoredly, while he was industriously trying to get loose.

"The attachment is mutual, sir," was the good-humored reply.

The Lafayette (Ia.) Journal publishes the following frigid extract from a reply by a Boone county subscriber to a dunning letter:

"Sorry to say, Old Hoss, that I can't pay. I am very tight up, which is to say I hain't nary red. Ef lard oil was ten cents a barrel, I couldn't buy enough to grease my har. Don't worry it, I freely forgive you the debt. Signed,——."

"Pray, sir," said a person at the back end of a crowd, to another who had just joined it, "pray, don't press upon me—there's no one behind you."

"But there may be presently," said the other; "besides, sir, what's the good of bein' in a crowd if one mayn't shove?"

"My brudders," said a waggish colored man to a crowd, "in all affliction, in all ob your troubles, dar is one place you can always find *sympathy*."

"Whar? whar?" shouted several.

"In de dictionary," he replied, rolling his eyes skyward.

The precocious lad who invented the following conundrum has had ice on his head for some days, and it is thought he will recover if kept quiet a week or so:

"Why is an elephant unlike a tree?"

"Because a tree leaves in the spring, and the elephant leaves when the menagerie does."

Short-lived Choler.—The provincial papers record, as a wonder, that the Americans are wearing "paper shirt collars, which a New York manufactory throws off at the rate of a thousand an hour." The invention is in keeping with the "Go-a-head" nation. What is paper, but linen in an advanced stage of existence?—*Punch.*

There is a chap out West so mean that he boils two bone buttons in a pint of water. This gruel lasts him exactly one month. He has used the buttons so long that he has boiled all the holes out of them. He keeps warm in winter time by standing under his next door neighbor's gas lamp.

We noticed a lady, says the Washington Star, on the Avenue this morning, wearing a magnificent silk dress, which she had evidently purchased at second-hand, for it had been made for a taller person, and at least a foot of the rich material swept the dirty sidewalk. P. S. A lady acquaintance says it was a train.

A genius is getting up a railroad car out of wrought iron and gutta percha. Such a car can be jammed, but not broken. It may "smash you up," but it can make no splinters to tear your trousers and lacerate your limbs. The idea is a good one, and, we hope, will realize his expectations.

"Emma," of the *Cayuga Chief*, says, we noticed the other day a little short-cloak and a pair of legs, trotting by the side of a comfortably-dressed mother. A little girl's dress, in our humble estimation, ought at least to reach as low as the small of the back!

We live in an age of quick ideas; men think quick, eat, sleep, court, marry and die quick—and slow coaches are not tolerated. "Go ahead, if you burst your boiler!" is the motto of every age—and he succeeds the best in every line of business who has the most of "do or die" in him.

Ruggins, at breakfast-table.—Mary Anne, bring me a egg. Finished daughter. An egg, if you please, father,—speak correctly. Ruggins. A negg, is it, my dear—a negg, eh? Well, Mary Anne, instead of one, you may bring me two neggs.

A certain Millerite author wrote a book proving that the world would come to an end in three months, and then tried to get a publisher to print it, and wait nine months for his pay! The publisher didn't like the looks of the last six months.

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